

STOURBRIDGE CHRONICLE



Thursday, January 31, 2013

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Family's pride

Recalling one local hero's wartime exploits in RAF

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Toll on the land taken by the Industrial Revolution

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Get stuck in

Saxons beat the mud and the opposition

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Care home faces big fine after tragedy



Hilda Fairweather

A CARE home near Stourbridge faces a hefty fine after a 91-year-old dementia sufferer who wandered away, died.

Hilda Fairweather of Kidderminster, died from hypothermia after walking out of the Abele View care home in Iwerley, near Stourbridge, in January 2009.

The company has pleaded guilty to failure to ensure the health and safety of its residents and failure to make a suitable and sufficient risk assessment.

A sentencing hearing will be held after April 29. Guidelines state that the home will face a fine, which is seldom less than £100,000.

Bernard Thorogood appeared at a hearing at Stafford Crown Court last week on behalf of Staffordshire District Council, which is prosecuting the home.

Also at the hearing was Mrs Fairweather's son Roger, aged 64, of Bishops Castle, Shropshire. Her husband George, 90, a retired carpenter, was unable to attend.

The manager of the care home did not comment.

Fears over waste plant

RESIDENTS concerned about a plan to build a waste recycling plant near their homes flocked to have a say on the proposal.

Increased traffic generated by the plant in Moor Street, Brierley Hill emerged as the main cause of concern.

But some people fear the development which would employ 30 people, could devalue their properties.

● Full story – Page 2

PLAN FOR EYESORE SITE IS WELCOMED

PLANS to breath new life into the site of a former war memorial club have been welcomed by a long-standing councillor.

by Heather Large

The land, off Amblecote High Street, has been earmarked for four care homes for young people with learning disabilities.

The derelict Amblecote War Memorial Club has stood empty for about a decade and people living nearby have long called for the site to be revamped.

Proposals to build four detached care homes for young adults have now gone before Dudley Council's planning bosses.

Benefit

Ward councillor Pat Martin said she was pleased that new plans had been put forward for the site. And she thought the proposed scheme would benefit residents in the borough.

"Over the years, we've seen many unviable plans submitted but on this occasion I am happy with the proposals.

"It's pleasing that the site could be used to provide care for people. There have been concerns in the past about traffic, but I think this development would only result in a minimum number of cars accessing the site.

"I am relieved and pleased that we finally have a viable scheme," she added.

Under the plans, each building would offer four bedrooms with en suite facilities for young adults, as well as a communal lounge and a kitchen.

New jobs created would range from care assistants to kitchen staff.

Agent Tommy Wong said in a report: "This proposal represents an opportunity to provide high quality and well designed care homes which will help to meet the

growing need for care bed spaces.

"The site's unique position, along a main transport route and within a residential area, close to the centre of Stourbridge, make it an ideal location for such a facility."

"The proposed care homes will provide a range of employment opportunities, from ancillary staff posts such as administration, maintenance, laundry, domestic and kitchen staff to care assistants," he added.

The War Memorial Club has suffered vandalism, fire and weather damage over the years.

It was founded in 1921 for ex-servicemen but closed in 2002, due to lack of bookings and activities.

It was on the market for three years and had a guide price of £175,000 before it was sold in September.

The site includes a bowling green and a car park.

Routes

Residents have been calling for action to clean up the site for a number of years.

They said that the building had become an eyesore on one of the main routes into Stourbridge town centre.

Plans were submitted in 2009 to turn the site into a restaurant and cabaret, but the scheme never got off the ground because of traffic concerns.

College wins praise from inspectors



Ashleigh Hipwood, Katherine Murray, Chris Cattell, David Faulkner, Eve Haddow, Gill Coldicott, Lucy Skidmore, Chloe Henderson, Alix Eccles and James Cox

A COLLEGE has been celebrating after being praised by inspectors.

Stourbridge College was given a good rating by an Ofsted team. And the inspectors praised the institution for its contribution to the economic regeneration of its part of the region.

Lead Ofsted inspector Anne Taylor said in her report that success rates in college-based courses had surpassed the national average.

She also found students on work place-based courses made "very good progress".

But ICT for users and foundation English courses were in need of improvement.

The report went on to say: "The college's clear mission and strategic priorities focus strongly on its contribution towards the economic regeneration of the area it serves and on improving the range and level of skills which its learners achieve."

Strategic

"The principal, her senior management team and governors have collaborated effectively to produce a strategic plan and objectives which are an accurate reflection of the college's mission."

College principal Lynette Cutting said: "This is really exciting news considering our proposals to merge with Birmingham Metropolitan College."

She said the proposed merger would see further investment in college facilities, and increased work experience on offer for students.

● Funding – Page 2

Borough schools in slip down rankings

DUDLEY has plummeted in the national rankings for its GCSE and A-level results.

In the new school league tables the borough, which covers Stourbridge, fell 43 places to 110th, based on the percentage of candidates achieving at least five A*-C grades at GCSE including English and maths – 56.1 per cent, down from 58.5 per cent.

The average A-level point score per candidate also dropped from 741.7 to 683.5 in 2012, meaning the borough's position sank from 49 to 102nd nationally.

But the borough did have two schools among the top 200 most-improved state secondary schools.

They were the Earls High School, Halesowen, which was 62nd and Ellowes Hall Sports College, in Gornal, which came in at 148th on the list.

Ellowes Hall headteacher Andy Griffiths said: "We're very ambitious for all of our pupils and I think we're preparing people to go out and take on the world."

Elsewhere in the Black Country, Wolverhampton and Walsall also recorded worse GCSE results.

But Sandwell recorded its best ever results and climbed 10 places in the league tables.

● Praised – Page 5

Holocaust is remembered

HUNDREDS of people gathered for ceremonies in Dudley borough for Holocaust Memorial Day.

At one event, pupils at Belle Vue Primary School in Wordsley listened to the recollections of Lia Lesser of Birmingham who survived the Holocaust.

And there was a commemoration at Dudley College at which those who died and local war veterans were remembered.

A spokeswoman of the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust said: "The day is about learning from the past to build a better future."



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Anger as insulation scheme is scrapped

THE number of people helped by a scheme to insulate homes and improve heating dropped by more than three quarters in the year before it was scrapped in government cuts.

Dudley North MP Ian Austin said the drop had left families "needlessly in the cold" because the government spent just £34.4m of the £100m Warm Front budget this

year. Across the region including Stourbridge, just over 4,000 people were helped with grants for insulation and new boilers under Warm Front in 2010/11 but the figure dropped to 867 the following year and 890 in the months before it was axed on January 19.

The Department for Energy and Climate Change said it had stopped marketing Warm Front in 2010/11

because it was oversubscribed. In Stourbridge, 300 homes were helped by the scheme in 2010-11 but that number was down to 65 in 2012-13.

Mr Austin said: "It's scandalous that over the half the money set aside to help families is predicted to remain unspent. The Government should be doing more to protect people against rising gas and electricity prices and the most effective

way people can save money on their bills is by improving their home's energy efficiency.

The scheme is being replaced by the Green Deal and Energy Company Obligation that lets people borrow the money for the work and pay it back through energy bills. Anyone who takes a loan and then moves house will pass on the debt to the new owner.

Plan for home at mill are opposed

PLANS to convert an 18th century mill in Halesowen into a children's home have sparked concerns.

English Heritage has objected to the proposals for Lutley Mill saying the renovations would be unsuited for the landmark.

Around 200 people have signed a petition opposing the change of use application for the Grade II listed building, off Lutley Lane, Hayley Green.

Dudley-based developer Madisun Residential is behind the scheme. In a letter to Dudley Council's planning department, director Rachel Weston said: "We want to maintain the character of the building, so it will stay as a friendly, warm and cosy environment for the young people living at the property."

But Alan Taylor of English Heritage said in a letter to the council the building "seems unsuited to the intense wear and tear of an institutional use".

West Midlands Fire Service says the safety escape routes are not suitable, and Halesowen councillor Ken Turner said: "There is the mill wheel and deep running water nearby, so you have to consider the safety of the children."

Residents' concerns on planned recycling plant

DOZENS of residents have had their say on controversial plans for a waste recycling plant to be built near homes in Brierley Hill.

Many said they were open to persuasion on the revised plans drawn up by energy firm Clean Power Properties, for a disused site in Moor Street.

But fears over increased traffic emerged as among the main reasons for opposition. There could be three lorries an hour going on to the site.

A second public consultation event was held last week to allow people living near the site to air their views.

Church Street resident Justine Chamberlain-Page brought her three sons to the event as she discussed the scheme with the firm's representatives.

"I like the idea of the plant but it is just where it is going to be that is the problem," the 41-year-old said.

"It is going to devalue our homes."

Fellow resident Tim Sunter said he was open minded about the scheme but added: "My biggest concern is about the transport with lorries driving past the houses."

Work Place Learning is funded by the European Social Fund and the Skills Funding Agency, with the West Yorkshire Consortium of Colleges accountable for driving the £55million project forward.

It promotes in-work training for people who want to progress and build on their skills. The partnership covers Yorkshire and the Humber, East and West Midlands and the North East and North West of England.

Stourbridge College's principal Lynette Cutting said: "We are always looking for additional funding to deliver training for young people in line with the Local Enterprise Partnership's focus on ensuring we have the right skills in the region."

"We're delighted to have been awarded this contract."

Generate

"The bridge nearby has already been narrowed, so I'd have to question that."

Bosses say the plant, which would employ up to 30 staff, would turn waste into gas to generate electricity to power up to 10,000 homes.

They added the six-acre plant would release low carbon dioxide emissions and no unpleasant odours.

Project manager Steve Crutchley said the firm had heeded people's concerns following the initial consultation.

"We have held this consultation because we wanted to show that we have listened to people's comments and wanted to explain the changes," he said.



Clean Power Properties representative Gavin Miller is pictured talking with resident and civic society chairman Tim Sunter and Councillor Judy Foster



An artist's impression showing how the new waste recycling plant will look

Charity's energetic open day

ENERGETIC and creative activities will be held at a charity open day.

Members of Age UK Dudley are holding the event for over-50s on February 4 at Brierley Hill Methodist Church, Bank Street, between 9.30am and 4.30pm.

There will be manicure and beauty sessions, and a knitting and crochet group will demonstrate skills and invite people to join.

Table tennis, cards, crib, indoor bowls and pool games will also be on offer. Other activities available include a complete exercise class with a tai chi tutor, line dancing, zumba and ballroom dancing.

A counselling service will also be held, with advice on access to health care and other issues. Wiltshire Farm Foods will provide free food to sample.

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Teacher is guilty of deceit over job

A MAN who lied to get a teaching job at a Stourbridge school has been found guilty of "unacceptable professional conduct".

Ryan Collett sent an email to employers at Ridgewood High School, in Wollaston, purporting to be from the University of Wolverhampton saying he had successfully completed the Qualified Teacher Status standards qualification.

But bosses at the school eventually found out he had failed a numeracy skills tests and had not completed the scheme.

Mr Collett, aged 28, has been spared a ban from teaching. Education Secretary Michael Gove agreed with the panel's verdict that it would not be in the public interest.

A Teaching Agency Professional Conduct Panel heard that Mr Collett was taken on as a newly qualified teacher and paid £5,000 more a year than his previous salary as an ICT instructor.

The panel, led by chairman Michael Sanderson, said Mr Collett had "attempted to mislead the school and the staff".

Club wins £50k for revamp

AN athletics club near Stourbridge has scooped £50,000 to pay for improvements.

Enville Athletics Social Club got the cash from Sport England.

Other clubs to benefit are Cannock Rugby Union Football Club, Springhill Cricket Club, Lower Penn, near Wolverhampton, and Alrewas Cricket Club, near Lichfield.

At Enville, wooden changing rooms will be replaced with a brick unit including disabled facilities, and a new heating system.

Cannock Rugby Club Chairman David Taylor said the cash would help get youngsters into sport adding: "We have big plans and they were all hinging on getting this money."

The fund is part of Sport England's Olympic and Paralympic legacy programme.

Call for residents to have say on care home future

CALLS for elderly residents to have their say on the future of a care home in the Black Country have been made as a report into services is compiled.

More than 5,000 people signed a petition opposing proposals to shut New Bradley Hall in Kingswinford, and dozens attended public meetings on the issue.

Then last April, Dudley Council dropped the plans and said that the Compton Drive home would remain open to existing residents and offer short-term respite care for them.

Council bosses launched a wide-ranging review into adult services to coincide with the Government's white paper on social care.

Campaigners had been promised regular updates on the review to allow them to be part of the decision-making process.

But campaigner Mac Scott MBE says that they had been invited to only one meeting last year, and demanded more talks.

"We had been promised we would be part of this stakeholder group but so far we have barely heard anything and only had a

meeting," he said. "All we ask is that we are told what is going on and are kept informed."

Dudley's adult social care boss Councillor Steve Waltho said that the future of New Bradley Hall was part of the review in the wake of pressure from funding cuts.

A range of "costed options" would be drawn up for the care home before a report came back before councillors in the summer, he added.

Councillor Waltho said a further stakeholder meeting with campaigners was

planned during the next two months.

"We have to consider services for the whole of the borough's residents, not just New Bradley Hall," he added.

Adult social care in the borough had been moving more towards independent living rather than residential stays within care homes.

Five extra care housing schemes, with separate flats inside a complex, will be built in the borough by 2015.

Schemes in Russells Hall and Coseley are already open.

Pilot's order to jump that probably kept Richard alive

THEY are legendary war stories that have been retold many times in books, documentaries and blockbuster films.

But for former RAF navigator Richard Corser they were a defining part of his life.

Mr Corser died last week at the age of 90. Today, his proud family reveal the remarkable story of his time in action and as a Second World War prisoner of war.

It is a story that includes some of the most iconic moments and faces of the conflict - the Great Escape, the Wooden Horse and pilot Douglas Bader.

It begins with his role as a navigator in an RAF Wellington, based at RAF Honington in Suffolk.

He joined the RAF in 1940 after first being in the Home Guard, serving in No 9 Bomber Squadron.

A year later, at the tender age of 19, his aircraft was hit over Germany and he was ordered to jump from his Wellington.

Ironically, after he and a radio operator bailed out, the pilot decided to attempt to fly on and the aircraft managed to limp back to base.

Daring

Given the low survival rate among RAF bomber crew, the order to jump probably saved Mr Corser's life.

Instead of continuing his job as a navigator, he started a four-year stint in some of the Nazis' most notorious prisoner of war camps.

Most of his time as a PoW was spent at Stalag Luft Three at Sagan, in what is now part of Poland. It was home to some of the war's most daring escape attempts and Mr Corser played his part in helping the effort.

His knowledge of German was utilised to translate broadcasts on radios kept hidden from the guards.

A warrant officer, he helped with the famous Wooden Horse escape from the camp in 1943. He was one of the PoWs who helped dispose of sand from the tunnel, dug beneath a vaulting horse, in the compound through small pouches made of old socks in their trousers.

One of the prisoners he knew was Carry On actor Peter Butterworth. After the war, Butterworth, who was one of the prisoners vaulting the horse during the escape, was ironically turned down for a role in the film The Wooden Horse. Eric Williams, who was one of the three escapees who successfully



Richard Corser in his flight suit with an Avro Anson training bomber before becoming a navigator



Richard Corser when he joined the RAF aged 18



Richard celebrates his 90th birthday in 2012

made it back to Britain, also signed a first edition copy of his book about the escape for his old friend.

Mr Corser also knew many of those who escaped from Stalag Luft Three in the Great Escape of 1944, which was made into a Hollywood movie in 1963 starring Steve McQueen, James Garner, and Richard Attenborough.

The tunnel was dug in the officer's compound and 76 men got away before it was discovered by the German guards.

Fifty of the 73 escapees who were recaptured were executed by the Nazis.

It was during this time that Mr Corser met the famous legless fighter ace Douglas Bader, sharing the same hut with him for a

time. In 1945 he was among the thousands of PoWs who were forced by the Germans to march hundreds of miles across Europe ahead of the advancing Soviet Red Army, to camps in Germany.

His son John, of Upper Gornal, explained: "It was obviously an ordeal for those who took part."

"My dad spoke of his horrific memories of the conditions that they faced. It was cold and they had very limited rations."

"He was very proud of his time in the RAF and of what the bombers did to win the war. He was delighted that a memorial to Bomber Command was finally opened in London last year."

"He enjoyed watching the films about

Stalag Luft Three and read extensively about the Second World War."

After being liberated by Allied troops, there was another twist to Mr Corser's early life on his return to Britain. His best friend in No 9 Bomber Squadron was a man called Eric Blackburn, from Irlam in Lancashire, who died during the war when his own bomber crashed in Lincolnshire.

Before his capture, Mr Corser had met Mr Blackburn's sister Marian, and on his return they married and produced six children.

John, aged 53, said: "The whole family is very proud of what he and my uncle did during the war. He used to tell us the stories of his time in the war."

After training as a teacher, Mr Corser and his wife moved from Irlam to Wolverhampton in the late 1950s and then to Sedgley in 1963.

He was principal of the Sedgley Evening Institute for nearly 20 years in the 1970s and 1980s and was also a fellow of the Royal Geographical Society and a member of the Caterpillar Club for people whose lives were saved by parachute.

"My father had a great love of maps and all aspects of geography," said John. "Sport was also among his loves and he was a keen tennis player and played amateur rugby league in his younger days."

Helped

Mr Corser specialised in remedial education and taught at a number of schools across the Black Country up until his retirement.

He loved to travel and made several visits to Germany in his later years and also visited his sister Heather in the United States where she had moved as a GI bride after the Second World War.

He also helped with the Arcalian Players Dramatic Society based at High Arcal School in Sedgley and made his debut on stage with them in his sixties.

In his seventies he helped start up a neighbourhood watch group in Richmond Road in Sedgley, where he lived for more than 40 years. Marian died in 1998 and he later moved to Tettenhall.

He died in New Cross Hospital in Wolverhampton in January after being admitted just before Christmas. He leaves his second wife Betty, six children, 12 grandchildren and 14 great-grandchildren.

His funeral was held at Gornal Wood Crematorium on Tuesday.

NEWS in brief

Mayor's plea to honour heroes

THERE is still time to nominate the borough's unsung heroes for the Mayor of Dudley's Civic Awards.

Residents are being urged to put forward people they think have gone the extra mile in the community, to be honoured in the tenth annual awards before the closing date of February 18.

To nominate visit www.dudley.gov.uk or fill in a form available from borough libraries.

Winners will be decided in March.

Anglers in seal row back down

ANGLERS have backed down in a row over a seal in the River Severn.

Conservationists including the RSPCA, condemned a bid by the Angling Trust to obtain a licence to kill the seal which has been spotted eating fish in Stourport Marina.

Members of the Angling Trust said they would work with groups to find a solution. The trust said a fall in river levels improved prospects of the animal being rescued or heading to sea.

Jewellery stolen in house break-in

THOUSANDS of pounds of jewellery including specially made rings were stolen from a house in Stourport last week.

Thieves broke in, causing £200 of damage, at the property in the Ribblesford Drive area. They made off with rings including a single square diamond band, worth £2,000, and a white gold wedding band, worth £500.

£1.5m repairs to historic tunnel

A £1.5 million project to restore an historic canal tunnel through Dudley has begun after investigations found it was unsafe.

Specialist engineers are starting essential maintenance at the 1.7 mile long Netherton Tunnel, which serves the Birmingham Canal Navigations network. The canal will be closed for four months.

Shop is damaged

BURGLARS caused around £2,000 damage when they used a pole and bricks to smash into Scope, in Worcester Street, Kidderminster, stealing two acoustic guitars worth around £100.

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NEWS

THE BEST
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RHODES

SO THAT'S it. In clear, concise language that no-one could possibly misunderstand, the die is cast. The British people will be given a simple, straightforward choice on our future membership of the EU. It is in or out. Or possibly innish or outish. Sort of. A bit. Depending...

□□□□□□□□

THE reality is that David Cameron is standing on the quayside, urging us to step aboard the good ship EU which, even as he talks, is casting off and moving away from us. By the time we get this promised referendum the Eurozone nations at the heart of today's EU will have become a superstate, in effect one nation with one central bank and one economic policy. Simply by standing still, the UK will move away. David Cameron, if he is still PM, will then proudly announce that he has negotiated a new relationship with Brussels and a grateful nation will vote to stay in (even though we will actually be out).

□□□□□□□□

DURING the wintry spell cars, vans, lorries and the eBay courier, gawd bless him, all managed to get up the farm track to Chateau Rhodes. But the Royal Mail didn't. I am reminded of the graffiti in a post office in New York. On the wall a famous inscription in praise of postal workers declares: "Neither snow nor rain nor heat nor gloom of night stays these couriers from the swift completion of their appointed rounds." Underneath, someone wrote: "So what is it, then?"

□□□□□□□□

WHITEHALL decrees that all children must be taught about the First World War. I can just imagine the government-approved curriculum for the 1914-18 conflict: mud, blood, poison gas, lions led by donkeys, Wilfred Owen, pointless sacrifice and let's not offend the Germans. From the 1930s onwards our view of the war as the needless, thoughtless slaughter of a generation at the hands of incompetent generals has been shaped by war poets, pacifists and the bleak, mocking satire of Oh, What a Lovely War! and Blackadder.

□□□□□□□□

MORE telly anachronisms. A reader claims that in the excellent drama Spies of Warsaw (BBC4) David Tennant was driving a version of the classic Citroën Light 15 which was not produced until well after the war. Mind you, this seems a small niggle, bearing in mind that not so long ago we saw David Tennant arriving in ancient Pompeii in a 1950s police telephone box.

□□□□□□□□

A HARVARD professor, George Church, is looking for an "adventurous" woman to give birth to a baby Neanderthal, assuming he can create the DNA of our long-extinct relative. I bet the queue is already forming. The eagerness of some women to become Jurassic Park-style surrogates is astonishing. In 1991, the frozen body of a man who died 5,300 years ago was found amazingly well preserved in the Alps. Rumour spread that Otzi, as he is known, contained fertile semen. Scientists were bombarded with requests from women eager to conceive a prehistoric baby. Maybe these ladies want to be famous. Or maybe they are just fed up with modern blokes.

□□□□□□□□

I HAD to read this letter a few times. A reader cheerfully recalls his schooldays: "I won an award for my punctuation. They gave me a posh trophy."

Don't miss Peter Rhodes every Monday to Friday in your Express & Star

New figures show fall in level of crime

CRIME in the West Midlands has plummeted over the past year according to latest statistics.

Figures for West Midlands Police showed a drop in every type of crime other than sexual offences, where there was a five per cent rise.

Across the force which covers Stourbridge, crime was down 13 per cent between September 2011 and September 2012. Criminal damage

was down 18 per cent while burglary dropped by 11 per cent and robbery fell 32 per cent. Of 177,675 recorded crimes, 26,119 were burglaries while 39,359 were "other theft offences".

Violence against the person accounted for 33,773 crimes.

There were 2,854 recorded sexual offences, 27,031 cases of criminal damage, 5,979 robberies, 8,794 drug

offences, 7,249 frauds and forgeries, and 2,917 classed as other offences.

In Staffordshire there was a five per cent drop in recorded crime, resulting in a total of 63,300 reports, included an 11 per cent rise in sexual offences, with police responding to 969 cases over the past year. Nationally, crime fell by eight per cent, or around 800,000, to 8.9 million in the year to the end of September.

The figures are made up of statistics from the Home Office and the Crime Survey for England and Wales which surveys people.

A review of the differences between the two sets of figures showed that police records appear to "overstate the actual level of reduction experienced by the general population," said the Office for National Statistics.

Pollution hazard of queuing vehicles

POLLUTION from queuing cars is the main challenge to air quality in the Dudley borough, according to a new report.

Officials say they are doing all they can to tackle the issue and have improved monitoring.

Air quality will be tested at the Burnt Tree junction, thanks to equipment funded by Tesco after it built a new superstore.

The A491 through Amblecote, Wordsley and Kingswinford will continue to be a focus for checks.

And a station near Windmill Hill and Colley Gate in Cradley is analysing air quality after the area was identified as a pollution hotspot.

Environment director John Millar said in the report that the authority was exceeding levels of nitrogen dioxide at a number of locations.

"The major source of pollution in these areas has been identified as road traffic," he added.

Improvements have been made in some areas and officials are conducting an independent review of the council's waste collection fleet to identify fuel savings and to minimise emissions.

Woman in booze sale to girl, 15

A WOMAN caught selling alcohol to a 15-year-old girl in Quarry Bank later told trading standards officers "my eyes aren't too good", a licensing hearing has been told.

Janice Williams was on her first day back following a five-month break working at Select and Save, in Woods Lane, when she served the girl in October.

Ms Williams, who no longer works for the shop, was fined £80 by Dudley Council after failing to ask for identification.

At Dudley council's licence committee meeting last week, members placed extra conditions on the shop licence.

Staff must be trained in alcohol sales policy and a register of refused sales must be kept.

Pub man fined £200 for fake football shirt

A SPORTS bar owner in Stourbridge who sold a fake England football shirt to a trading standards officer, has been fined £200.

Wayne Etheridge, aged 43, was due to face two other charges of possessing 112 false shirts in the lead-up to the 2010 World Cup, but they were dropped by the prosecution.

Dudley Magistrates' Court heard last week that Etheridge, who used to run The Cross Inn Sports Bar in Glass House Hill, sold the shirt to trading standards officer Laura Fisher on June 22.

The shirt was among others later sent to Umbro's head of brand protection who said that it was fake.

Ms Fisher said she was at the pub at about lunchtime on September 12, 2010 and saw a sign advertising the football shirts for £27.50 each. A genuine shirt sold for about £44.

She said: "There were two shirts on display and I asked for a red in a small size.



Wayne Etheridge - fined

Church to mark 200th anniversary

A CHURCH will celebrate its 200th anniversary next month.

The Rev Simon Falshaw said the congregation at Christ Church in Lye High Street would use the milestone to look at the past.

He added: "Christ Church is a modern and lively church looking forward to Lye in the future.

"Next month the whole church will be going back in time to 1913 to creatively imagine what church life was like 100 years ago."

On February 10, the congregation will dress in Edwardian clothes, listen to a Victorian sermon, sing long forgotten hymns and use the Old Book of Common Prayer.

Intending

"A few minutes later the person behind the bar returned with one."

Etheridge, who said he had run pubs locally for about 20 years, told the court: "I think I was on the premises but I didn't sell the shirt."

Etheridge, of Studley Gate, Wollaston, had denied all four charges but after his solicitor Timothy Gascoyne argued that there was no evidence tying the two bags of football shirts analysed by Umbro to those seized at the pub, the two charges relating to having 112 of the shirts intending to sell them were dropped.

Etheridge was found guilty of two Trade Marks Act charges - selling the shirt with a fake Double Diamond Device logo and a fake Umbro logo.

He was fined £200 and ordered to pay £85 costs and a £15 victim surcharge.

Family firm marks milestone



Celebrating are, seated, director Paul Smith, of Stourbridge, with, from left, Melanie Gillespie, Ian Payne, Jerome Gillespie, and Nathan Smith

A FAMILY joinery firm in Stourbridge has been celebrating its 25th year in business.

Director Paul Smith, aged 56, marked the milestone at Prospect Joinery Ltd in Old Wharf Road surrounded by his family.

Daughter Melanie Gillespie, 26, joined the company seven years ago and works in the firm's office.

Her husband of two years Jerome, 32,

works on the factory floor alongside her 31-year-old brother Nathan.

Mr Smith said: "It's nice to work with the family and we all get on well. We are pleased to have reached this landmark."

The firm was based at Prospect Hill, in Oldswinford, Stourbridge, when it was established by Mr Smith and his business partner Gavin Reveley.

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Service to mark closure of works

THE days of working at a well-known steelworks have been remembered at a service marking 30 years since its closure.

Former workers of Brierley Hill's Round Oak Steelworks were among those attending last week's commemoration in the town.

Church leaders from the Black Country Urban Industrial Mission organised the service after being inspired by the pride and esteem in which people still hold the former factory.

The mission brings together chaplains seeking to connect the church with the community and the economy, through visiting workplaces.

The Rev Andrew Mann-Ray led the service for around 30 people at Brierley Hill Methodist Church.

He said the idea for the service came during historian Ned Williams' latest book launch when he saw the depth of feeling for the steelworks. "It was part of people's lives for generations," he said.

"When we realised it was 30 years since it closed we thought it was important we should do something."

Mayor of Dudley, Councillor Melvyn Mottram said: "It is important to have a service like this to show that we've not forgotten."

Hopes for action on blackspot

TRAFFIC calming measures could be introduced at a notorious accident blackspot between Stourbridge and Kidderminster.

Hundreds of people signed a petition calling for the speed limit on the A449 at Cookley to be cut from 60mph to 40mph after a 22-year-old shop worker died there last September.

The petition with 350 names, was handed to Worcestershire County Council before Christmas.

Councillor Chris Nicholls, a member of Wyre Forest District Council who has been campaigning to have the speed limit reduced since the death of Natasha Marie Kew of Wordsley, said he was "hoping speed restrictions or traffic calming measures might be introduced".

MP defends actions on housing scheme



Efforts – MP Sajid Javid

AN MP has assured campaigners fighting to stop a major housing development near Hagley that he did all he could to halt the scheme.

Campaigners on behalf of the Hagley Residents Action Group have demanded more support from MP Sajid Javid as they pledge to continue their fight against the development which will consist of 175 homes.

District councillors approved plans for the scheme on land bordered by the A456 Kidderminster

Road and the A491 Stourbridge Road, despite hundreds of protests. Villagers mounted a high-profile campaign against the scheme.

They collected a 4,000-strong petition and delivered a letter of objection to Lord Cobham, on whose land the development is to be built.

And now, having lost the planning decision, the campaigners are exploring the possibility of launching a judicial review against the development.

Their main concerns over the pro-

positional centre on increased traffic and resulting pollution from vehicles, along with pressure the extra homes could put on local services such as schools and GP surgeries.

Opposition

Sajid Javid Tory MP for Bromsgrove, whose constituency covers Hagley and the surrounding villages, has come in for criticism from the protesters in the village.

The campaign group has written to Mr Javid insisting on his help

after they say they were "kicked in the teeth by local democracy".

Mr Javid said: "The depth of local opposition to Cala Homes' proposal is very clear to me, and I know how long and hard Hagley residents have fought this development."

"In representing their views, I have done all that I can to make sure that my constituents' concerns have been aired and considered robustly at all stages."

Schools are praised despite slipping down league table

Photographic society members snap up tips

IN the digital age when every mobile phone has a camera, has the traditional camera had its day?

No, according to the Stourbridge Photographic Society, which has a thriving membership of about 80 people who gather for weekly meetings.

At their first meeting of 2013, people who had received cameras for Christmas were invited along for tips on how to use their new devices.

Members packed into the group's latest get-together at The Bonded Warehouse in Canal Street.

Society president Heather Woodhams said: "On this kind of night we are helping people to get to grips with their cameras and try to encourage new people to come in. There's something about taking pictures and producing something a bit special with pictures."

"When people take pictures with their camera phone, it is just a quick snap, but having a big proper camera, you can go out and do something a bit more with it."

Holiday

Colin and Lynn Pugh, of Sydney Road, Cradley Heath, were looking for advice on how to use a new camera they had bought ahead of a trip to Hawaii later this year.

Retired maintenance worker Colin, aged 65, said: "I bought a new camera for going on holiday with and wanted to find out how it works."

Matt Street of Kidderminster was at the club to meet other like-minded people. The 33-year-old said: "I like capturing moments."

"I didn't come so much for help with anything, just really being with other people and chatting about things with other people with the same interests."

Mr Street said he thought the



Members of the Stourbridge Photographic Society, Jo Allan, John Bissell, Phil Turner and Heather Woodhams at the Bonded Warehouse

demise of the camera chain Jessops was an indication of the "point-and-shoot" camera industry declining because of the growing popularity of camera phones.

He added: "Point-and-shoot cameras are going to die a death because smartphones and iPads are so good. But the more creative sort of photography won't because they can't compete with an SLR

(single lens reflex) camera." Keith Leatham, a member of the society since 1982 was giving lessons on how to use Photoshop computer software.

The 67-year-old of Oak Hill Drive, Brierley Hill, said: "I joined the society as new to photography and took it from there."

Simon Williams from the Poolhouse Farm estate in Wombourne



Matt Street, of Kidderminster, learns the basics of studio lighting during the drop-in session held by Stourbridge Photographic Society

is particularly interested in wildlife photography. The 64-year-old, who used to run an engineering company, said: "I want to be able to take better pictures and enhance them. I've got four grandchildren and I would like to be able to take better pictures of them."

"Now that I'm retired I would like to spend a lot of time and get better quality."

EDUCATION bosses in Dudley borough, which includes Stourbridge, have praised pupils and teachers – even though the borough has slipped down the latest school league table.

In the table for GCSE results published last week, Dudley fell 43 places, from 67 to 110.

The figures showed that the overall percentage of pupils gaining at least five A*-C grades at GCSE including English and maths, was 56.1 per cent, down from 58.5 per cent.

But education boss Councillor Tim Crumpton said the number of pupils achieving five or more A* to C grades, which may include English or maths but not both, had improved.

The figure was 83.2 per cent, compared to 81 per cent the year before.

National

He said: "I would like to congratulate all pupils and am extremely pleased to see their hard work and dedication paying off."

"The teachers and parents should also take great pride in their support of the young people."

Despite the borough's dip, it did have two schools in the top 200 most-improved state secondary schools for proportion of pupils gaining five A*-C grades.

They were the Earls High School, Halesowen, which was 62nd and Ellowes Hall Sports College, Gornal, at 148th.

Meanwhile in Sandwell pupils achieved the borough's best-ever GCSE examination results which saw the borough rise 10 places in the national standings.

The dramatic rise saw it move up to 128th out of 151 local authorities.

NEWS in brief

Ambulance staff praised by MP

STOURBRIDGE MP Margot James has spoken of her admiration for the work of ambulance staff.

Touring the service's HQ during a snowfall, she said: "We are fortunate to have a service we can be confident of, even in the direst weather conditions."

Last Friday, the service received more than 2,600 emergency calls – an increase of nearly 14 per cent on the previous Friday.

Why are we here? For philosophy

A SERIES of free philosophy talks are taking place at Halesowen Library throughout the year. They will be on different subjects and held in the Shennstone Theatre on level 7 of the library between 5.45pm and 6.45pm.

The talks are on JMarch 27, May 29, July 31, September 25 and November 27. Councillor Khurshid Ahmed, cabinet member for housing, libraries and adult learning, said: "The series of talks is one of the many activities we have taking place in our libraries."

Singers invited to a workshop

A SINGING workshop will take place at a Stourbridge church next month.

The choir at St Thomas's Church in Market Street will be running the class on February 2 at the church hall.

It will run from 10am until 3.30pm and no previous experience is necessary. To book a place, call Mollie Berry on 01384 373111.

Loneliness of nation's dogs

ONE in four dogs is unhappy, according to their owners.

The study of 2,000 UK dog owners found 22 per cent of their pets sleep in their owners' bed or bedroom, 10 per cent never socialise with other dogs, and 25 per cent have never eaten a bone.

Church targeted

THIEVES caused damage worth £900 and took a large-screen TV during a break-in at a church in Kidderminster.

The thieves forced their way into the building at the rear of Baxter United Reformed Church in the Bull Ring.

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NEWS

I'm helpless, says shop owner after third raid

A SHOP owner says he feels helpless to stop thieves after his store was targeted by raiders for the third time in year.

Raiders are thought to have used a pick-up truck to smash into Costcutters, in Clarence Street, Upper Gornal, early hours on Sunday.

Although they brought down a wall and got to a cashpoint inside the store, the thugs were unable to break the ATM lock and fled empty-handed.

The store, which is connected to a BP petrol station, remained opened on Monday while contractors made the area safe by securing the wall and taking loose brickwork away.

Shop owner Selliah Bala said the raid was the thirsince he took over a year ago.

Targeted

He said it was targeted twice last August.

The first time the thieves broke in through a back fire exit. Then a week later two men threatened a shop assistant with a hammer at closing time.

Around £8,000 worth of cigarettes were stolen during the two raids.

Mr Bala said: "It is so bad round here, we could never

think to open 24 hours because of the potential for thefts.

"I don't know what to do, we have alarms and CCTV, but that doesn't stop the thieves. I feel helpless."

Despite the third raid, Mr Bala said he would not be giving up running the shop.

The cashpoint is owned by Cardpoint Services Ltd.

Upper Gornal and Woodsetton Councillor Keiran Casey said: "It is a shock that the garage has been targeted again, but I would never call it a particularly bad area for crime."

Lee Page, of West Midlands Police, confirmed officers were investigating.

He said: "The offenders got away in two vehicles after having smashed into the side wall of the building. Forensic investigators attended the scene."

No arrests have yet been made.

Police plea for help over snatch attempt



A CCTV image of the man police want to speak to

A SHOPWORKER'S finger was injured when a man tried to snatch a gold chain worth £2,700 from a Dudley jewellery shop.

Police think the attempted robbery could be linked with a raid in which a £5,000 Rolex was stolen in Staffordshire on the same day.

The raids happened on October 17 but police have just released CCTV footage of a man they want to speak to in connection with the incident.

A man went into G&K Jewellers in Plaza Mall, High Street, Dudley, at around 10.10am and asked to see the gold chain.

Shop assistant Gemma Jones, aged 24, was showing it to him when he suddenly grabbed it and tried to run off.

Gemma was able to keep hold of it and he left empty-handed - but she suffered an injury to her finger.

At around 4pm the same day, the Rolex was stolen from City Jewellers in Market Street, Lichfield.

Anyone with information can call police on 101.

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NEWS

Army cadets chip in to help build stronger ties

Wheels from windfall



Carnival queen Hannah Cornish and, from left, 1st Kidderminster Boys' Brigade's Charlie Tindell, Oliver Reah and James Cook

BOYS' Brigade members are travelling in style thanks to a £2,000 windfall from Kidderminster Carnival organisers.

The donation has enabled the Mitton Hall 1st Kidderminster brigade to replace its old minibus with a newer second-hand 17-seater. The brigade raised the remaining £4,000 to buy the vehicle.

Officer Graham Knight said the carnival donation had been a "major" boost.

He said: "We did not expect to raise the money so quickly and we are very, very grateful to the carnival

for its assistance.

"If we didn't have a minibus it would have a major impact on the company as we also use it to take the boys to camps and weekly activities."

Kidderminster Carnival chairman Colin Hill said: "The committee is delighted to be able to give £2,000 to the brigade and is very grateful for the support its members gave to last year's carnival after being chosen as the main beneficiary."

This year's carnival will take place at Brinton Park on Saturday June 22.

ARMY cadets have given their free time to work with the Canal & River Trust to keep towpaths along a canal at Stourport free of litter and vegetation.

Hereford and Worcester Army Cadets gained £3,000 in Ministry of Defence funding to buy safety equipment and tools to complete the project.

Now the cadets intend to roll out the activity to more detachments.

Meanwhile Worcestershire County Council is encouraging other groups to apply for a slice of a £30 million funding pot which is being allocated for spending across the country before April 2015.

The money is available to support local projects aimed at strengthening ties and mutual understanding between the Armed Forces and local residents.

Applications for funding between £100 and £250,000 will be considered and can be submitted by volunteer groups, charities, and public bodies.

Any group wanting to be considered needs to submit an application to the Worcestershire Armed Forces Community Covenant Working Group before 5pm on February 1.

Councillor Rob Adams, Worcestershire County Council chairman, said: "This is excellent news that Worcestershire communities are already benefiting from a successful application for Ministry of Defence funding."

Nursery gets lower rating

A NURSERY in West Bromwich has been described as 'satisfactory' by Ofsted, one grade lower than its last inspection when it received a 'good' rating.

Inspectors visited YMCA Black Country Group Nursery in Carters Green in December. A newly-published report said: "Children are warmly welcomed into a bright and clean environment by staff..." But the report said there were not enough positives to put the nursery in the 'good' bracket.

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MEMORY LANE



Tipping the Slag – a painting of industrial Black Country by Edwin Butler Bayliss (Picture: Christopher Bayliss)



Children playing on coal waste at The Lunt, Bilston, in the 1920s (Picture: Wolverhampton Archives)

'An angry sea of black shale'

THE work of the great Black Country painter Edwin Butler Bayliss now on display in Wolverhampton gives us an idea of what it must have felt like to look out over the pre-war landscape of the area.

In particular, it depicts a scene laid waste by mining and quarrying. Air pollution of the Black Country is well known – it's how many believe it got its name. But the long-term abuse of the land surface is less widely understood.

"Unlike anything else in England" is how the historian William Hoskins described it in the 1950s – and he had travelled about a bit.

He likened it to a strange desert, "a black, tormented Sahara... the aftermath of robber-exploitation of the earth".

Ten years before, while planning post war Black Country housing estates, the architect Charles Reilly poetically described the area as 'an angry sea of black shale'.

But all this devastation wasn't a product of the 1950s or the 1940s.

We can follow the trail of evidence

by Paul Quigley

Landscape archaeologist, the distinctly black country network

further back. In the early 1930s a planner wrote that the Black Country contained "twenty square miles where almost the only land not built up is covered by the refuse from disused pits".

Older evidence, in the photos of the 1920s for example, like the one here of kids playing on coal waste in Bilston, tells us that the state of dereliction has roots going further back.

Marked

In fact the problem of derelict land in the Black Country goes deep into the previous century.

One way we know this is a recent English Heritage study of the area – the Historic Landscape Characterisation.

This uses historic maps to trace the extent of dereliction. The map here is based on the study.

It shows the area of Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall, and Wolverhampton marked with all the derelict land in

1939. At that point there was 38 square kilometres of it (14 square miles) in a pattern which traced the whole South Staffordshire coalfield.

This might be shocking enough (it was probably the most intense concentration of derelict land in Britain at the time).

But the study reveals something else. It shows that nearly two-thirds of this neglected land had been in this state for at least 40 years.

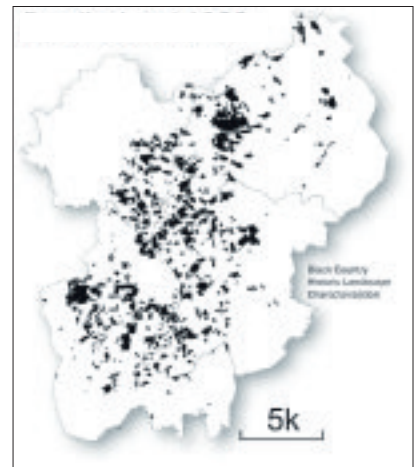
Some were even older – two fifths of the waste land which existed in 1939 had lain around in that state since 1885 or before.

The fact is that, in the mid 19th century the unplanned rush to exploit mineral and other resources had brought the small area of the Black Country into a position of international economic significance.

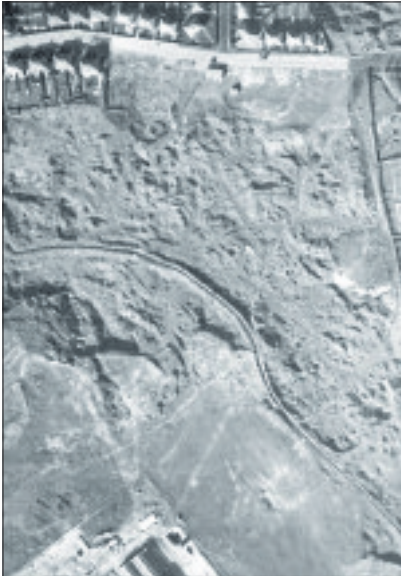
But it left a long-lasting scar on the local environment which arguably is still visible in the area today.

Edwin Butler Bayliss: Poet Painter of the Black Country is at Wolverhampton Art Gallery until April 27.

More information on derelict land in the Black Country is available at <http://distinctlyblackcountry.org.uk>



The swathe of derelict land in the Black Country in 1939



A slice of Black Country landscape in 1948



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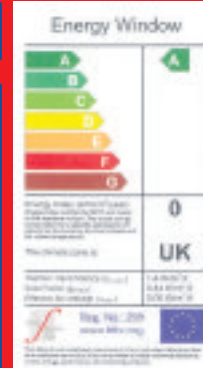
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NEWS

Tesco still favourite

TESCO kept its place as the UK's favourite supermarket, but there is a battle for second place as Asda and Sainsbury's slug it out, says research by Staffordshire-based shopping behaviour specialists.

The latest SBXL study reveals that while Asda was second until September, Sainsbury's took the slot for the rest of the year up to Christmas. Now Asda has second place again.

Spokeswoman Serena Tippler said when they asked shoppers what their least favourite supermarket was, Asda came top. Shoppers at Asda, Aldi and Lidl say they are more influenced by prices and promotions.

Cuts to hit gluten-free food on NHS prescription

THE range of gluten-free products available through an NHS prescription in the Dudley borough has been scaled back as part of cost-cutting plans.

More than £200,000 was spent on food for coeliac patients in the area in 12 months, health bosses say. It included bread, pasta, pizza bases, crackers, biscuits and cakes.

The Dudley Clinical Commissioning Group, which oversees healthcare in the borough needs to cut £1.4million from the prescribing budgets in the current financial year.

It has now introduced new rules for the amount and range of gluten-free products that will be available on prescription.

It estimates that £20,000 a year will be saved by ceasing the prescribing of gluten-free cakes and biscuits.

Limitations on the number of staple food items people can get per month have also been introduced. Adults aged 19 and over will be restricted to a maximum of 10 gluten-free units per month.

Dudley CCG's accountable officer Paul Maubach said: "Gluten-free products can be very expensive when obtained via an NHS prescription and the products are often considerably more costly than the price of a similar gluten free product purchased in shops."

Decisions
"In the current economic climate tough decisions have to be made to ensure we can meet the health needs of all our population fairly whilst balancing the books."

Hence, Dudley CCG in discussion with local GPs and dieticians, has taken the decision to restrict the range and quantity of gluten-free products that are made available on NHS prescription.

"We recognise that gluten-free products are more costly than their gluten-containing equivalents from the supermarket, and thus remain committed to continue to support gluten-free prescribing in part, rather than stopping the prescribing of all items altogether."

"It will have benefits for the appearance of the area as well as providing much needed accommodation suitable for those on lower incomes."

One letter of objection had been submitted from a nearby firm which was concerned the development could restrict its business.

Accounts stay still

THREE-QUARTERS of people say they have never switched their current account provider – and for the vast majority it has never even crossed their minds.

This is despite findings in the trading watchdog's report that one in five people rated their provider as unsatisfactory or poor.

Providers generated revenues of £8.8 billion from current accounts in 2011 – the equivalent of £139 per active account – the Office of Fair Trading estimates. There are around 76 million accounts in the UK, of which 61 million are in regular use. The OFT found that fewer than one in 20 people said they had switched their main current account in the last 12 months.

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LETTERS

Cameron musn't be fobbed off

RE: David Cameron and his promise of a referendum on Europe. I have never been asked if I wish to be a member.

What we were asked many years ago was if we wanted to be a member of the European Economic Community (EEC). This was to be an organisation whose aim was to make trade between the European countries easier to operate.

At that time we were trading with the whole of the World. I worked on projects which went to many countries including Russia, India, Europe and further. Once we joined the EEC business/trade outside Europe appeared to

evaporate. Initially the French appeared not to want us in. By the time we became a member the Germans and the French had things all sown up. The Germans had the industry and the French the agriculture. As a result of this our industry went to the wall.

Steel plants such as those in Bilston and Round Oak were closed down. We no longer exported to the rest of the world (we had been sending buses to South America by the ship load). This was the start of the country moving backward.

The EEC evolved into a political

entity. We were forced to accept an inquisitorial legal system rather than our Common Law. We had to accept any law passed by the now European Community (EU) whether they suited us or not.

Let us hope our Prime Minister goes with a positive agenda not spouting, as some have in the past, I will show them what I want then leave us much weaker than when he went.

David Cameron go well prepared and do not be fobbed off with what the EU want us to accept.

D WINTERBORN
Dudley

Marvellous heart and lung centre

I HAVE just had a spell in the New Cross Heart & Lung centre for a valve replacement and bypass.

This is the NHS at its best. This centre is really marvellous, all the staff are kind, helpful and very efficient. I really couldn't have had any better care it was 1st class.

Special thanks to Mr Matuszewski and his team for my new lease of life.

Long live the NHS.
COLIN MARSH
Gornal Wood

Cheaper tickets

I HAVE just received a reminder to renew my bus pass.

It must cost more than a bomb to print and issues these passes.

Why can't the bus companies issue cheap tickets for shoppers. This would encourage more people to use the buses and visit shops.

M WILSON
Harding Street
Coseley

LETTERS to the Editor

POST

Stourbridge Chronicle, Chronicle Editorial, 51-53 Queen Street, Wolverhampton WV1 1ES

Letters should be brief and MUST include name, address and telephone number of the writer. The Editor reserves the right to condense letters.

E-MAIL

Stourbridge.chrons@
expressandstar.co.uk

Mystery of the lady with a snow shovel

I WOULD like to express my thanks to a wonderful young lady, whose name I should have got and two gentlemen who helped recover my car from Berrybush Gardens near Sedgley.

There is only one road that exits the estate, Arcal Street a steep incline and Dudley Council had not treated the road thus a lot of the residents would have been unable to leave the estate.

Recently my vehicle, a nice German model but the worst car ever in snow, was stranded, thus I thought it best to leave the vehicle there.

A couple of nights later my friend and I set about recovering the vehicle. Even with 60 years driving experience and almost 28 stone of masculinity between us, all our attempts to move the vehicle couldn't budge it, then suddenly a delightful young lady appeared with a shovel and not only set about digging us out.

Aided by two locals we managed to succeed. I would like to express my extreme gratitude to the two gents who also helped, but moreover I would like to contact the young lady, without whose "expertise" we would still be there.

MR GARY WYLDE, Woodsetton

Read the manual on tyres in winter

RE: Rear wheel drive is no use in the snow. Nonsense.

Read the manufacturers handbook, and fit winter tyres. If you want to get around safe in general winter conditions, and be able to drive up and down hills, brake safely etc in snow, then from my experience winter tyres will work as they are designed to, including in thick snow.

I've no idea how they work, but rest assured, they do, indeed unbelievably so.

After last year's snow, I've now fitted them to my wife's and daughter's cars as well as my rear-wheel drive. You cannot compromise on safety. If you do, then you should follow Mr Parker's advice, and do not go out in adverse conditions if you are not properly prepared.

I would repeat, read your car's handbook on driving in winter conditions.

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NEWS

Football club bosses are defiant in face of arson



A portable building used by Mostyn Rangers Football Club was destroyed in a suspected arson attack

BOSSES of a football club have vowed not to be beaten by arsonists who destroyed their changing rooms.

Two portable toilets and changing rooms belonging to Mostyn Rangers FC were burned down in the attack at the playing fields off Zortech Avenue in Kidderminster.

Club secretary Steve Fox said the club had been left upset by the attack to the building which will cost at least £1,000 to replace, while the equipment it contained – which included goalposts, nets, corner flags and kits – was worth up to another £300.

But he said management would hold an emergency meeting on January 29

to discuss replacing the facilities, which were used by both mens and children's teams.

He said: "We need to get it up and running as soon as possible. The facilities are not covered by insurance, so this will be a significant hit for the club in these hard times."

Upset

"We are very upset. The managers have put in a lot of hard work at the club and it's all voluntary."

"We have been here since 1974 using these facilities."

Mr Fox added that matches and training sessions would continue as normal at the grounds, which are owned by Stourbridge College, once

the harsh weather had subsided.

The fire was discovered shortly before 10.50am on January 16.

The blaze, which melted the toilets and seriously damaged the building.

Pc Dan Southan said: "We are investigating this as arson and want to hear about any sightings of people near those facilities on the field there from around 11am on January 16."

"The grounds can be seen from Burlish Top and any golfers on the adjoining course may also have noticed if anyone was there at the time."

Witnesses or anyone with information should call 101, quoting the incident reference 214-S-160113 or Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

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Tues 26th Feb. 19.00-21.00. 5 wks £26.70 #

PATCHWORK

Wednesdays 14.30-16.30.

New course starts April 13. Contact Student Services

for more information.

UPHOLSTERY AND SOFT FURNISHING

suitable for all levels. Mon 25th Feb. 19.00-21.00. 5 wks £25.80 #

NEEDLE FELT

Tues 5th Feb. 9.30-11.30 or Thurs 7th Feb. 19.00-21.00, 6 wks.
£31.00.

PLAY THE GUITAR

Beginners Thursdays 20.00-21.00

Continuing Beginners Thursday 19.00-20.00

Improvers: Tuesdays 19.00-21.00,

Intermediates: Mondays 19.00-21.00

New courses start April 13. Contact Student Services
for more information.

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Tues 12th Mar. 19.00-21.00. 3 wks. £21.90 #

Short'N'Sweet

INDIAN HEAD MASSAGE

Tues 12th Feb. 19.00-21.00. 3 wks. £21.90 #

Short'N'Sweet

MEDITATION

Thurs 7th Mar 19.00-20.30. Both 4 wks. £21.90 #

Short'N'Sweet

FITNESS YOGA @ Oakfield

Short'N'Sweet

New course starts April 13. Contact Student Services for more information.

FITNESS GLIDING @ Oakfield

Short'N'Sweet

Fri 15th Feb 11.15-12.15. 6 wks. £25.90 #

PILATES

Beginners classes on Thursdays 18.00-19.00 and @ Oakfield
Centre on Friday 10.00-11.00.

Improvers: Tuesdays 19.00-20.00; Wednesday 18.30-19.30;

Thursdays 19.05-20.05 and 20.10-21.10

New courses start April 13. Contact Student Services for more information.

LEGS, BUMS & TUMS

Tuesdays 20.05-21.05 New course starts April 13. Contact
Student Services for more information.

BALLROOM and LATIN AMERICAN DANCING

Monday Beginners 18.30-19.30 and Improvers/Intermediates
19.30-20.45 New classes start in April 2013. Contact Student
Services for more information.

ADULT SWIMMING LESSONS

New classes start in April 2013. Contact Student Services for
more information. Courses take place on Mondays.

Beginners: 19.00-19.45. Improvers: 19.45-20.30.

Intermediates: 20.30-21.15

PRIVATE SWIMMING LESSONS

In a group of 2 or 1 to 1. Contact the office for further details

RLSS NATIONAL POOL LIFEGUARD

18th Feb 2013, 8th Apr 2013, 29th July OR 5th August 2013.

All 8.30-17.00. 6 days. £173.75 plus additional fees £78.75

RLSS NATIONAL RESCUE TEST for SWIMMING

TEACHERS/COACHES

1 day retake; Mon 22nd July 2013 subject to previous qualification
and training £36.90, add. fees £26.95.

Full course: Tues 23rd July and Wed 24th July 2013, 8.30-16.00,
£57.80, add. fees £26.95.

DUDLEY MBC INDUCTION

TRAINING FOR POOLSIDE ASSISTANTS

Mon 17th June 2013 9.00-12.00 £18.40

EMERGENCY FIRST AID

Fri. 8th Feb. OR Sat. 23rd Mar. Both 09.00-16.00. 1 day. £36.90

PAEDIATRIC EMERGENCY FIRST AID

Sat 9th Feb. OR Fri. 22nd Mar. Both 09.00-13.00. 1/2 day £24.55

START YOUR OWN BUSINESS

New courses start in April 13. Contact Student Services for more
information.

INTRO. TO TRADING ON THE STOCK MARKET

New courses start in April 13. Contact Student Services for more
information.

BUYING AND SELLING ON E-BAY

Monday 4th Mar. 19.00 - 21.00. 4 wks. £29.15. #

COMPUTING for the TERRIFIED

Learn to use a computer from scratch! 4 wk courses start
Wed. 6th Mar. 9.30-11.30. £29.15 #.

FLORISTRY

3 wk course starts Tuesday 12th Feb 14.30-16.30.
£27.90 Cons. £22.45 and £11.00 #.

FLORAL CRAFTS

3 wk course starts Tuesday 12th Feb 14.30-16.30.
£27.90 Cons. £22.45 and £11.00 #.

LEARN TO SCULPT IN STONE

6 wk course starts Thursday 7th Feb. 19.00 - 21.00 £48.50 #.

FACE PAINTING AND GLITTER TATTOOS

New course starts April 13. Contact Student Services for more
information.

Phone us to add your name to our 'I'm interested list' for:

BEGINNERS GUIDE: APPLE MAC COMPUTERS

Mon 13th May 19.00-20.30. 6 wks. £43.70 #

SOCIAL MEDIA: FACEBOOK, TWITTER, SKYPE, YOU TUBE. WHATS THE FUSS?

Tues. 7th May 19.00-20.30. 6 wks. £43.70 #

COMMUNITY SESSIONS

ADULT SWIMMING: Mon. 11.50-12.35, Tues. 19.00-20.00,
Thurs. 19.00-20.15. All £2.60

AQUAFIT: Wed. 12.15-13.00, Fri. 11.50-12.35. £2.60.
Wed. 19.00-20.00, Sun. 9.00-10.00. £3.70

FITNESS SWIM Mon. 18.00-18.45. £1.60 for 10-19 yrs olds

More information? 07963 986672, OR 141communitygroup@hotmail.co.uk

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Beginners: Mon 25th Feb 5 wks.

16.45-17.45 OR 17.45-18.45. £43.75

Intermediates: **New course starts April 2013.**



LEARNING 4 LIFE SWIM SCHOOL

Term Dates: Monday 15th April 2013 to Sunday 21st July 2013
excluding Mon 6th May 2013 and Saturday 25th May to Sunday
2nd June 2013. Tues to Fri 12 wks. Sat, Sun, Mon 13wks

	12 WKS	13 WKS
COST: First Steps, Pre Beg, Beg, Improve.	£49.20	£53.30
Intermediates 1, 2 and 3	£42.60	£46.15
Rookie, W. Skills, L'saving, S & Swim	£53.40	£57.85

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Beginner: Min age 4 1/2 years. Provides skill development to swim 5m on a front stroke and 5m back crawl.

Improver: Improves aquatic skills and stamina to swim 15m on a front stroke and 15m back crawl.

Intermediate 1: Develops confidence in deep water and front crawl breathing action to swim 20 meters on a front stroke and 20m back crawl.

Intermediate 2: Helps to build stamina and endurance to swim 50m on a front stroke and 25m on back crawl.

Intermediate 3: Develops competence on all four strokes (25m) and a front and back stroke for 100m.

Water Skills: To develop survival and rescue skills.

Rookie Lifeguard: Learn new skills, have fun and overcome challenges. Min. age 9 years. Must be able to swim 20 m on a front stroke and 20 m on a back stroke.

Survive & Swim: Min age 11.5 years. Must be able to swim 20m on a front stroke and 20 m on a back stroke. Develops water safety knowledge, first aid, self rescue, survival skills, lifesaving techniques. Can test speed and stamina in a competitive situation. Reg. fee £23.95.

THE SMALL PRINT

April courses May be subject to availability. When you call we will either register your interest. OR if places are available confirm your booking and take payment.

What is Short'N'Sweet?

An introductory taster course of 6 hrs in a small group

Holiday Dates: Learning4Life is closed Monday 18th February to opening from 16th -24th Feb.

This programme is subject to change: particularly if we are unable to recruit minimum class numbers



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Dudley
Metropolitan Borough Council

NEWS

£1.6m development to help homeless underway

Mystery can be murder



Colin Young as Inspector Craddock and Sandy Tudor as Letitia Blacklock

SUPER sleuth Miss Marple will be finding out whodunnit in the latest show at Kidderminster's Rose Theatre.

Resident company The Nonentities will be performing Agatha Christie's *A Murder is Announced* runs until February 2.

The play is set in the village of Chipping Cleghorn.

Publicity manager Kerena Taylor said: "The Nonentities production of *A Murder is Announced* will be a treat for lovers of mysteries full as it is with weird characters, dramatic situations and enough red herrings to sink a trawler."

Performances will take place at 7.30pm.

The theatre says tickets are

selling well and advising people to book early. The next production by The Nonentities will be Ira Levin's *Deathtrap* from February 25 until March 2. Famed playwright Sidney Bruhl debuts the latest in a series of Broadway flops and returns to his opulent Long Island home and his sympathetic but sick wife, Myra.

Kidderminster Operatic & Dramatic Society will then perform their version of *High Society* at the theatre from March 7-16.

The box office is open on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday between 9.30am and 3pm and on Saturday between 9.30am and 1.30pm.

For details call 01562 743745 or visit www.rosetheatre.co.uk

WORK has begun on a £1.6m housing development providing accommodation for young people at risk of being made homeless.

The centre in Bromsgrove Street, Kidderminster will help 16 to 25-year-olds access training and employment as well as provide somewhere safe and secure to live.

The Foyer scheme will be managed by St Basil's, a regional charity which works to prevent youth homelessness.

Once completed the development will have 19 accommodation units, office space for staff and training space for the residents.

Service manager Emma Poole said: "St Basil's has been in Kidderminster since 2009 providing support to local young people and we can see how important schemes like this are."

"It will mirror the scheme we have in Bromsgrove which has proved to be a great success."

Funding for the project has come from various sources including the WM Housing Group, the Homes and Communities Agency, Worcestershire County Council and Wyre Forest District Council. The development is in the "Eastern Gateway" of Kidderminster town centre which has been earmarked for regeneration by the district council.

Councillor Anne Hingley said: "This new development will make a real contribution to reducing levels of youth unemployment and homelessness."

"The council is approached by many young people every year. Unfortunately, good quality, supported accommodation is very limited. This scheme will make a difference to the lives of the district's young people".

Charity shop needs help

A CHARITY shop in Kidderminster is looking for donations and volunteers.

Sense is asking people to bring their unwanted furniture, electrical goods and bric-a-brac to its Coventry Street store.

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NEWS

Come and see colourful marine life at aquarium



Stacey Ward, assistant manager of aquarium house Forty Fathoms, displays the shop's new coral tank

EXOTIC marine life from around the globe is attracting customers to a Kidderminster aquarium.

Forty Fathoms, Greatfield Road is displaying species from across the world in two 10ft by 5ft, 20 inches deep tanks – one for saltwater corals and another for aquatic plants.

The marine life has come from locations as exotic as Indonesia and Singapore.

Manager Wez Sharif said trade had boosted as families from the town flocked to see the colourful displays. He said it has around 50 soft and hard corals. "They've come from all around the world and they look wonderful."

The shop owners invested "thousands" in the tanks and their contents, but Mr Sharif said it had all been worth it.

He said: "The reaction has been really good and it's pushed sales up. We have had a few people who have never been in before stop by to see the corals."

"We're getting lots of families and people who have never kept marine tanks before who are now asking how to keep them." The family-run aquarium also houses more than 300 species of fish – from cold water varieties to tropical – and around 100 other kinds of plants and corals.



Some of the marine life on show

Clive's transformation

A working union between two dental professionals is helping to bring about life-changing outcomes. Retired sales director Clive, right, with wife Margaret, was terrified of dentists. Read why now he's recommending his friends book in to see them.

Suction solution

A CUTTING-EDGE development to help resolve the stability problems faced by thousands of denture wearers is now available.

Denturist Steven Burchell Dip CDT RCS(Eng) says the invention has the potential to improve the life quality of those experiencing long-term problems with ill-fitting teeth. The Ultra Suction teeth are held in place by tiny valve-operated suction devices.

All on 4 now here

ONE of the most advanced restorative options for denture wearers is available in Wolverhampton and Dudley. An implant system called All on 4 offers a permanently retained full arch of teeth in a day. **Call us for more details.**

Traditional options

THE work of the Denture Clinic has found satisfied customers from as far away as Spain. Its hand-crafted dentures, made in laboratories on the premises, are known for their natural look. Clinic principal Steven Burchell Dip CDT RCS (Eng), says: "I remain passionate about resolving denture problems and for many, quality, traditional dentures can bring about hugely effective results."

CLIVE was so afraid of the dentist he plucked up all of his courage and begged him to extract all of his teeth so that he'd never have problems ever again.

That was more than 20 years ago, but what the retired sales director didn't know was that his tooth troubles were far from over.

Following the extractions dentures were fitted and he no problems for a few years. It was a welcome break from the pain he had experienced and the catalogue of dental disasters he had endured.

But the natural ageing process began to take its toll and Clive experienced stability problems with the lower denture as his gums receded. For five years he endured the embarrassment of dentures, sore spots on his gums and denying himself some of his favourite foods. "It took real determination to face up to the problem and the prospect of more dental work."

Clive recalls his first dental nightmare: Stationed at Malta while in the Royal Navy, he suddenly had raging toothache the night before he was due to play in a football match.

"I'd been drinking to dull the pain but as soon as I was back on board the duty dentists was summoned. He'd been drinking too and when he injected me with the anaesthetic he broke the needle.

"I eventually had to have an X-ray so he could find where the needle was. That was me finished. I'd do anything to avoid the dentist from then on."

In recent years Clive has had four denture relines to help the stability issues, but none provided a long-term solution.

Flashing his new smile and laughing heartily, Clive adds: "Things were so bad that if I turned to the right my teeth would still be facing forward."

"I can't stress how big a deal it was for me to get things sorted. I was terrified, so when I saw a piece in the paper about Steven Burchell and suction denture technology, I agreed to see him."

Clive's gum erosion was too severe for the suction system to work effectively and he decided to have implant-retained dentures. He was referred by Mr Burchell Dip CDT RCS (Eng), whose Denture Clinic is based at the Parkdale Dental Clinic in Tettenhall Road, Wolverhampton, and North Street, Dudley, to implantologist Mr Jonathon Pugh BDS MSc. Mr Pugh, principal of the Parkdale practice, carried out the surgery and the prosthetics were hand-crafted by Mr Burchell.

Clive recalls the procedure. "I was dreading it, but all I felt was a sensation that Mr Pugh was rubbing my gums." Clive's wife, Margaret, adds: "It's true! I was allowed to sit in with Clive. We were both treated excellently."

Since having the implant-retained dentures, Clive has been able to bite into crispy apples and indulge himself with pork crackling. "I feel comfortable and confident, it's the best money I've ever spent and have recommended both Steve and Jon to friends."



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Parkdale Dental Clinic

Walk on fire to raise cash for charity

ANIMAL lovers are being urged to walk on fire to raise funds for a new £2 million pet hospital. The PDSA Firewalk Challenge is on March 9 at the De Vere Village hotel, Dudley.

The charity hopes the event, at 6pm, will raise thousands towards its Pet Hospital Appeal.

Full training will be provided on the night. There is a £10 registration fee and participants must be at least 16. People can log on to www.pdsa.org.uk/fund for details.

MP calls for cap on the cost of credit to prevent debt spiral

AN MP has spoken out against the increase in pay day loan companies offering quick cash to customers, on high streets in the Black Country and Staffordshire.

Jan Austin, who represents Dudley North, says he is concerned about the growing number of firms offering loans often at very high rates of interest, saying it could lure borrowers into ballooning debts.

He said the number of people seeking pay day loans nationwide had increased by 300 per cent in the past two years.

The MP said in Dudley High Street, the number of shops offering quick cash had risen to six in recent months.

In Wolverhampton there are four within the ring road while Sandwell has five and Walsall two. There are two in Cannock, two in Kidderminster and three in Stafford's main precinct.

Pay day loans are described as small short-term loans which often have very high rates of interest. People often turn to them to tide them over until their next pay day.

Mr Austin believes the Government should cap the cost of credit and he would promote the work of those offering more affordable loans, like credit unions.

He added: "I am going to talk to the council to see what more can be done to promote the work of lenders like credit

union Castle and Crystal in Dudley."

Mr Austin said that, unlike pay day loan companies, the credit union offered affordable loans with modest rates of interest.

Jason Wassell, of loan company Cheque Centre, which has branches in the region including Dudley, said: "Our average loan is about £200 until pay day, and most customers have no trouble paying when their loan is due. We are always happy to discuss our business with community leaders."

Britannia to disappear after merger

THE Britannia building society name is to disappear from the West Midlands.

Branches in Dudley will be rebranded as the Co-operative Bank. And 37 branches across the country, including Wolverhampton, will close. It follows the society's merger with the Co-operative Bank in 2009.

More than three dozen branches of the Britannia building society will close.

The move will affect branches in Halesowen, Blackheath, Kidderminster and West Bromwich.

Nursery celebrates its 15th



Owner Debbie Mason with youngsters Chloe Gosling aged three, Ben Cochrane and staff at Playbox Nursery as they get ready for their 15th birthday

YOUNG tots baked cakes and sang Happy Birthday to celebrate the 15th anniversary of a nursery in Kingswinford.

Play Box Nursery marked the occasion with a week of activities, including trampolining, painting and an outing to Himley Park.

It ended with a party at the nursery, on 3rd Avenue, The Pensnett Estate, where the youngsters baked a muffin cake and sang songs. Nursery owner Debbie Mason said: "It was such good fun. The kids all made their own party hats and sang Happy Birthday to the nursery."

Special

"When we first opened it was just going to be a small family business, but now some of the children who first started coming here are at secondary school. It feels very special."

In September the business opened a pre-school in Wall Heath Community Centre, in Envile Road, which takes up to 26 children aged between three and four years old.

Ms Mason said she was now looking for new premises in which to open another nursery by the end of the year.

She said: "We have looked into a few different places but none have worked out so far."



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NEWS

Gallery campaigners in pledge to keep fighting

CAMPAIGNERS fighting the loss of services at Kidderminster Library gallery have pledged to battle on - despite them deciding to withdraw a Judicial Review.

The legal challenge to Worcestershire County Council's decision to take away space at the Library Gallery to make room for offices for staff, was to be based on claims of a lack of consultation and legal arguments.

But after taking further advice, the calls for the Judicial Review have been dropped. Kidderminster Gallery Friends are concerned that not only will exhibition and music space be lost but that local history records are also under threat.

They are determined to fight the plans and refute the council's continued claims that there will be no loss of service.

Stephen Brown, secretary of the Friends, said: "The plans clearly mean the music performances will go, there is a loss of gallery space and the local history records are under threat, if some of them have not already been removed."

The Friends submitted a Freedom of Information request to the council for the release of paperwork relating to the original gallery design but say they were told finding this would involve too much time and money. A spokesman for Worcestershire County Council said: "The authority is confident information provided to the Planning and Regulatory Committee was accurate."

ATM man's car is stolen

A CAR was stolen while its owner used a cash machine near Halesowen.

Thieves struck outside the Spar, St Kenelm's Road, Romsley, police said.

The driver of the dark blue Audi A4 Quattro estate, left the keys in the driver's door side pocket and the vehicle unlocked while he used the cash machine.

He saw two men crossing the road and take his vehicle. Witnesses should call 101 quoting incident 356-s-160113.

Pupils' eastern adventure



Aiming for foreign climes, teacher Ron Jackson with, back, Katie Ludlam, Pippa Brazier and Sophie Bishop and, front, Laura Bennett

STUDENTS in Kidderminster are packing their bags for a month-long expedition to Cambodia and Thailand.

The students from Holy Trinity International School and King Charles I School will be leaving for their 'World Challenge Expedition' in July as part of their enrichment studies. In Cambodia they will visit

Ankor Wat, the world's largest Hindu temple complex, before undertaking a six-day trek in Chiang Mai, Northern Thailand and working in an orphanage.

To fund the trip, students from both schools held car boot sales, cake sales and a variety of performance. More fundraisers are planned.

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Theatre Weekend from £189.⁹⁵

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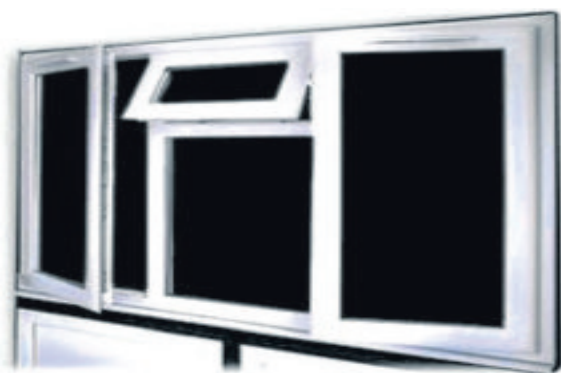
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CLUB NEWS

Speaker's 'Birdman' ruffles sweet old memories feathers with talk

PELSALL 'E' TG

SNOW and blizzards reduced attendance at the January meeting by 50 per cent, but those who braved the elements were rewarded with a nostalgic talk by Margaret Smallman on 'Growing up in a Corner Shop'.

Ladies were able to reminisce about the sweet treats of their childhoods. Margaret also recalled the times when the corner shop was the hub of the community and the centre for gossip.

Matters discussed during the formal part of the meeting covered ideas for forthcoming trips, nominations for the committee election at the AGM on March 21, the Federation Dinner and a possible venue and entertainment for the Guild's 50th birthday dinner on the May 16.

The competition for the most popular decorative tin was won by Ann Sale and the monthly raffle was won by Val Walker.

On February 21, Jacqueline Smith of Nova Chocolatier will demonstrate the art of the chocolatier and hopefully bringing along a few samples. The competition is for the most popular pair of earrings.

Pelsall Guild meets on the third Thursday of each month at 7.45pm. At Pelsall Community Centre, Station Road, Pelsall. For more details, call Val Walker on 01922 684724, or Margaret Worrall on 01922 682466.



Guest speaker Colin McShane - Birdman Of Brewood

SHARESHILL WI

AT THE January meeting, Colin McShane talked to the group about our 'Feathered friends'.

Known as the Birdman of Brewood and a member of Brewood Ringers, he gave a really interesting and amusing talk about the lives and habits of those birds visiting our gardens.

Members learned how to recognise them, how they feed and how to help them through the winter.

Finally, Colin encouraged the ladies to join in with the RSPB's big bird watch and members armed with counting forms will be ready to check on bird life in their gardens.

Fashion night aids appeal

BROWNHILLS TWG

BROWNHILLS Townswomen are organising an evening filled with fashion to raise money for the group's chosen charity of the year, the new Cyberknife for the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham.

Vice chairman Astrid van der Burgt said: "This Cyberknife will benefit people all across the Midlands."

The Cyberknife will be the first of its kind in the UK, providing precision radiotherapy treatment for cancer patients. "We wanted

to organise a fun event to raise awareness of the machine and collect funds for it at the same time," added Astrid.

The guild chooses a charity to support each year.

The fashion show will be held at the Brownhills Memorial on Thursday, March 7 with doors opening at 7pm.

There will be plenty of

bargains as well as a chance to win one a prize donated by local businesses. Tickets are £2.50 each. Contact Astrid on 07900 267366 or Mary on 01543-360890.

Further information about the Cyberknife can be found at: www.qecancerappeal.org

Brownhills Townswomen's Guild is a registered charity and the group meets every second Tuesday of the month, apart from August, in the Lichfield Suite of the Memorial Hall at 7.30pm.

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NEWS

TV shows help to deliver midwife course interest

SOARING numbers of young people are signing up to be midwives – thanks to the popularity of television shows featuring the profession.

Call The Midwife and One Born Every Minute are being credited with the rise. Demand for courses is now so high that applications outweigh the number of places available.

The University of Wolverhampton received nearly 1,000 applications for 63 midwife places in 2011 while at Staffordshire University, the number of applications increased by more than 13 per cent on the previous year. Midwifery courses at the University of Worcester are also oversubscribed.

Tutors have credited the popularity of the two TV shows as one of the factors contributing to the surge in interest.

Call the Midwife, which has started its second series on BBC1, is based on the real life experiences of nurse Jennifer Worth.

Covers

It stars Miranda Hart and has been a runaway success with almost nine million viewers tuning in each week to follow the lives of midwives in the 1950s.

One Born Every Minute, on Channel 4, is also a hit. The show covers life on a maternity ward following mothers and staff.

Education chiefs at the University of Wolverhampton say there is now a growing number of people who are seeking a career in midwifery.

Marcia Edwards, head of midwifery, maternity and the newborn said: "Midwifery has always been a popular course here at Wolverhampton and we have never experienced any difficulty in filling places. However, since Call



Student Charlotte Milligan finds *Call the Midwife* provides valuable insights

the Midwife and One Born Every Minute there has been a positive knock-on effect.

"More often than not midwives are part of one of the most special moments of people's lives, and TV programmes such as these bring the ups and downs of life as a midwife into viewers' minds."

Charlotte Milligan is studying to be

a midwife at Wolverhampton – something she says she has wanted to do for many years.

The 18-year-old, of Featherstone said: "I think programmes do trigger an interest," she said. "It's encourages people to find out more. I watch them because I'm happy to watch anything to do with midwifery."

CALA HOMES INVITES YOU TO HAVE YOUR SAY.

CALA Homes is inviting local people in Hagley to have their say on its forthcoming development on Kidderminster Road.

Workshops will be held to consider community views on the detail of the development, including the style of the homes, the design of the site and the use of public open space.

The workshops, which will take place on Saturday 23rd and Monday 25th February 2013, will be run by an independent facilitator and the results will form part of CALA Homes' detailed planning application.

Register your interest for these workshops before 5pm on 15th February at www.cala.co.uk/hagley

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BOOK REVIEWS

Tube celebrates 150 years of keeping London on the move

THE LONDON Underground, the world's first underground railway, celebrated 150 years of keeping the capital on the move in January.

The city at the heart of the world's greatest empire was grinding to a halt in the 1850s. London had seen its population more than double in half a century to two-and-half-million. The streets were choked by horse-drawn traffic and pedestrians.

Fanciful projects were suggested to solve this problem, some now sounding like they've come straight out of a steampunk fantasy – such as great elevated glass corridors for overhead trains.

Engineering

It was decided to burrow under the streets, taking the new-fangled steam locomotive into the bowels of the earth with navies using the 'cut and cover' method to create railway tunnels.

The three-and-half-mile Metropolitan Railway, linking Paddington, Euston and King's Cross stations with the city's financial and business heart, opened on January 9, 1863. A grand celebration dinner was held underground but notable by his absence was Prime Minister Lord Palmerston, who replied that at the age of 79 he would prefer to stay above ground for a few more years.

This set in motion one of



The famous Underground roundel



Written by experts on the system



Underground art © TfL from the London Transport Museum collection

the great transport endeavours of the Victorian and Edwardian ages, eras resplendent with awe-inspiring engineering projects.

Written by three experts from the London Transport Museum, located in Covent Garden, **Underground: How the Tube Shaped London** (Allen Lane, hardback, £25) is a large handsome book. It is very informative and beautifully illustrated with diagrams, photographs and the distinctive style of Underground art. It tells the story of the network as it grew, with

steam locos giving way to electric tube trains, boring ever deeper under the city.

Writers David Bownes, Oliver Green and Sam Mullins share chapters. Topics range from the Victorian entrepreneurs to the war years, when the deep lines became unofficial air raid shelters, to the political wrangles of the post-war period, finishing with the 21st century modern system that provides four million passenger journeys a day.

For a more poetic exploration of the world beneath the streets of the capital, Peter Ackroyd's **London**

Under (Vintage, paperback, £7.99) descends into the tube and the catacombs, bunkers, vaults, pipes and sewers carved out of the clay.

It's a slim volume but packed with anecdotes and fascinating trivia, such as forgotten Westbourne river still flowing through an iron pipe at Sloane Street tube station.

Ackroyd never misses an opportunity to link this hidden realm with the underworlds of mythology. He also includes an excellent bibliography for further reading.

Leon Burakowski

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NEWS



Bessie Lewis surrounded by her family to celebrate her 100th birthday with a party

Mayor and singer arrive at Bessie's birthday party

A GREAT-GRANDMOTHER of six has celebrated her 100th birthday with friends and family.

Bessie Lewis was treated to a visit by the mayor of Dudley and a live singer.

"She is very independent and strong minded but she has always been family orientated and spent her time caring for the family," said her son Martyn.

Mrs Lewis was born and raised in Springfield, near Rowley Regis, before the family moved to Kates Hill, Dudley.

She was living with her parents Hubert and Emma, when her future husband, Harold, moved in as a lodger. The pair fell in love and were married at St John's Church, Kates Hill, in 1939.

Harold drove lorries during the war before becoming a coach driver.

The couple settled in Warrens Hall



Bessie, front far right, at the age of 13, during a family wedding

Road and had three children - Mavis, Philip and Martyn - four grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

Mr Lewis died in 1980 and Bessie moved into Belvidere Residential Home, Stourbridge Road, Dudley, last May.

Her birthday was marked with a party organised by staff at the home, and her family.

"She has spent most of her life looking after us all, so we're pleased we were able to have a party to celebrate with her," Martyn said.

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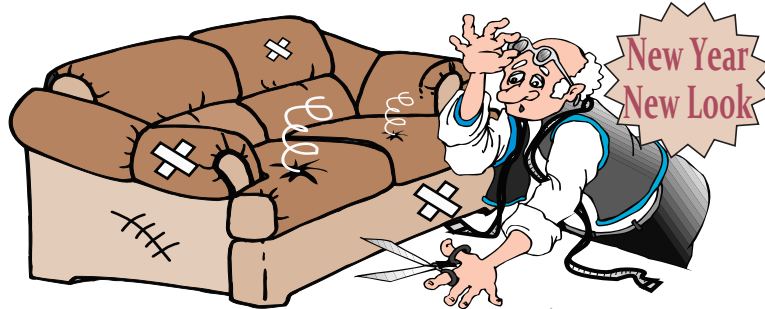


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NEWS

Brits come clean on state of their homes

MILLIONS of Brits reckon their home is a 'pigsty' because they are just too busy to clean, according to a new study.

Researchers have found that seven in 10 of us are unable to find the time to take care of everyday chores such as vacuuming, dusting and cleaning the bathroom.

Fifty-seven per cent of people even admitted they have times when they would describe their home as a 'pigsty' because they never have a chance to tidy it up.

More than one in five have even refused to let people into their home because it was in such a mess.

A spokesperson for cleaning product firm Spontex, which commissioned the research, said: "We are leading busier lives than ever and when you are juggling so much, it's inevitable that something has to give."

Chunks

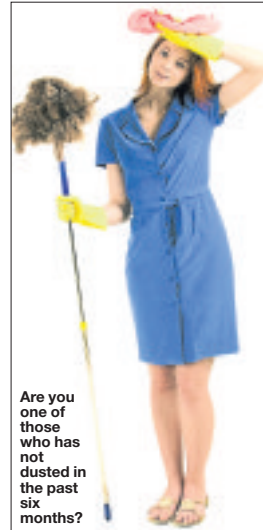
"And it seems that for many, staying on top of their household chores and keeping their home spotless is what they are letting fall by the wayside."

"But this means that many Brits aren't happy with the state of the home, and it's alarming to see that so many even have times when they would describe their home as being like a pigsty."

"Cleaning can be done in small chunks which makes it much more manageable to fit everything in and around your everyday life."

"If you are struggling to fit the chores in, rather than doing a big clean once in a while, running the vacuum round one day and then cleaning the bathrooms the next can make life a lot easier."

The study of 2,000 people found that



Are you one of those who has not dusted in the past six months?

63 per cent do not think their home is as clean as they would like it to be, with half of those blaming this on being too busy to clean.

Another 39 per cent simply do not like cleaning while 21 per cent do not think they are very good at it.

And almost a quarter say they have got better things to do than worry about the state of their house.

Forty-two per cent have never cleaned their home from top to bottom,

and, even those who have admit it was an average of almost five months since they last did this.

More than one in 10 owned up to not cleaning their bathroom for at least a month nor having done any ironing for a year.

One in 20 had not washed clothes and one in 10 had not got the vacuum out for a month or more.

Almost one in 10 had not used a duster for at least six months, while one in 20 admitted it had been at least a year since mopping a floor.

More than one in 20 owned up to never cleaning their windows.

And 60 per cent did not think they will ever have a spotless home.

Researchers also revealed that a third of people's homes are such a mess, that visitors or friends have commented on the state of it.

Clutter

And more than half have rowed with their other half about the mess.

It also emerged that 73 per cent of people regularly shove things under cushions or behind sofas so any clutter is out of sight when someone pops in.

While 60 per cent have shut doors to certain rooms so guests cannot see the mess. Despite this, 90 per cent claim they consider themselves to be a tidy person.

The Spontex spokesperson added: "Our advice is to do a few, small tasks daily or several times a week rather than try and spend a whole day just cleaning."

"This will keep your home in top condition with minimal effort and give you the satisfaction of completing your chores."

"Many people feel a real sense of fulfilment and more in control of their lives when they are on top of jobs round the house."

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What's On! Stourbridge

Time warp classic that is timeless

The Rocky Horror Show, New Alex, B-ham

CELEBRATING its 40th year, Richard O'Brien's cult hit *The Rocky Horror Show* remains the sexiest stage musical on the planet.

For the uninitiated, it is a hilarious celebration of the B-movie, following newly engaged couple Brad and Janet as they take shelter at the home of a mad transvestite scientist, Frank-N-Furter, who has been building the perfect muscle man.

The latest production, directed by Christopher Luscombe, will not have disappointed die-hard fans who, as always came dressed, in their wigs and suspenders and rocked along to the Time Warp.

Of particular note were Roxanne Pallet, playing Janet, Ben Forster, as Brad, and Philip Franks narrating. Rhidian kept up with the best of them.

As is traditional, the audience interjected with regular vulgar outbursts (leave the kids at home for this one). *Rocky Horror* runs until Saturday.

Will Ackermann

Diamond tribute sparkles in show

Real Diamond, The Grand, W-ton
NEIL Diamond fans were rewarded with a real gem of a show, celebrating the singer's 73rd birthday.

John Hylton's vocal tribute to his hero was as near as one can get to the legend himself.

Les Jowett

Classic Christie whodunnits bring mystery and murder

MYSTERY grips two theatres in the region with the arrival on tour of a pair of Agatha Christie plays, one of them the most famous whodunnit in British stage history.

The Mousetrap, the longest running show in the West End with more than 25,000 performances during 60 years, is coming to Birmingham New Alexandra Theatre as part of its first UK tour, to mark its diamond anniversary.

It's at the Alex from Monday to Saturday with a cast

Rock and soul gigs to relish

AN EXCELLENT late winter and spring for gigs is in prospect in the Black Country and Birmingham.

Highlights include a visit by legendary Blues Brothers guitarist Steve Cropper, with members of The Animals at The Robin 2 in Bilston tonight (Thursday).

Chart-topping teenage singer-songwriter Jake Bugg is at Birmingham HMV Institute on February 19. BBC DJ and former Fun Lovin' Criminal, Huey Morgan brings his New Yorkers to the Slade Rooms, Wolverhampton, on March 9.

And Welsh rockers The Stereophonics road test new album *Graffiti On The Train* at Wolverhampton Civic on March 16.

including Karl Howman (from TV's *Brushstrokes*), Bruno Langley (Coronation Street), Graham Seed (from radio's *The Archers*) and former *EastEnders* Elizabeth Power, Steven France, Jemma Walker and Clare Wilkie. Bob Saul reprises his West End role as Sgt Trotter.

The Mousetrap is also going to be staged at Wolverhampton Grand in late May. Meanwhile, The Official Agatha Christie Theatre Company brings *Go Back To Murder*, in which a daughter seeks to clear her mother's name, to the Grand from Monday to Saturday.

The star-studded cast includes film and TV actors Sophie Ward (*Land Girls*), Lysette Anthony (*Three Up Three Down*), Robert Duncan (*Drop The Dead Donkey*), Ben Nealon (*Soldier Soldier*), Gary Mavers (*Peak Practice*) and Smethwick-born Liza Goddard.



Opera and family combine in a poignant theme for comedian Mark Thomas

Bravo idea for comic's latest tour

COMEDIAN and activist Mark Thomas has exposed arms dealers and abuses of civil liberties and is as handy with a megaphone as a microphone - holding the world record for the most individual protests held in a day.

In recent years he has been rambling along the Israeli border and travelled around Britain collecting clauses for his *Manifesto*, on BBC Radio 4.

But the theme of his latest tour is a more personal affair; the story of Mark's father, a builder with a love of opera. It tells of the comedian's attempt to put an opera on at the Bournemouth bungalow home of his father, who has a degenerative disease.

It is about love, death, fathers and sons, and the search for peace... with quite a few gags thrown in.

The *Bravo Figaro* tour brings him to Stourbridge Town Hall on Friday, February 15. Meanwhile, he will be back to his *Manifesto* at the Glee Club in Birmingham on Thursday, March 7.

Felons' farce is criminal genius

The Ladykillers, Grand W-ton

SCREENWRITER William Rose's original black comedy, about a criminal gang posing as a string ensemble to fool their elderly landlady, is given a broad farce treatment aiming for big laughs, which it achieves. An excellent cast and an ingenious set ensure a satisfying production.

Paul Bown is a treat as the slightly deranged would-be criminal mastermind whilst Michelle Dotrice is his delightful nemesis as the semi-senile, stubborn senior.

The rest of the gang are colourful characters too, William Troughton as a pill-popping young villain, Cliff Parisi as a word-mangling Romanian cut-throat, Clive Mantle as a nervous conman with transvestite tendencies and Chris McCalphy as a punch-drunk former boxer with a soft streak.

The other star is Michael Taylor's award-nominated set, a lopsided and subsided skewiff Victorian house. This is an exuberant play and runs until Saturday.

Leon Burakowski

Singers to bring sound of musicals

STARLIGHT Singers will perform numbers from musicals at Stourport Civic Hall on February 9.

Tickets for the event, costing £9, are available by calling 01562 638864 or 07746 675314 or from the Civic Hall Box Office.

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What's On!

SATURDAY'S TV 2.02.13

Listings supplied by Press Association

CHOICE



Britain's Brightest

BBC1, 7pm
Given his offbeat turns on Mock the Week, it's little wonder Milton Jones' star has been on the rise for some years now. This week he'll be helping to raise a few laughs on Clare Balding's puzzle-themed show, and with next week's final being the main focus for the final six contestants, it'll be intriguing to see who has the right stuff to make it through to the series end. Aside from Mr Jones, other challenges involve those nutty boys/men Madness, and a German bottle band. As ever the self-confessed brainboxes aim to get that one step closer to claiming the prize of £50,000.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. 10.00 Saturday Kitchen Live. **11.30** The Good Cook. (R) **12.00** BBC News. Regional News. Weather. **12.15** Football Focus. **1.00** Live Six Nations Rugby Union. **3.30** Live Six Nations Rugby Union. **5.55** BBC News. Regional News. Weather. **6.15** **Pointless Celebrities.** With brother and sister Colin Jackson and Suzanne Packer. (R)
7.00 **Britain's Brightest.** The last six contestants compete for the remaining place in next week's final, taking on challenges involving pop group Madness, comedian Milton Jones and a German bottle band.
8.00 **The National Lottery: In It To Win It.** Dale Winton presents the quiz in which five contestants pit their wits to scoop a big cash prize. Includes the National Lottery draws, presented by Myleene Klass.
8.50 **Casualty.** Jordan's return to Holby reaches a dramatic climax when he is called upon to save the life of the person who killed his girlfriend. Michael French stars.
9.40 **Mrs Brown's Boys.** Rory and Dino have a bust-up. Mark and Betty announce their imminent departure to Australia and a strange phone call causes the Brown children to suspect one of them may be adopted. (R)
10.10 **BBC News.** Weather.
10.30 **Match of the Day.** Including action from Fulham v Manchester United. National Lottery Update.
12.00 **The Football League Show.** **1.15** Weather. **1.20** BBC News.

BBC2

6.00 **Film: Devil's Canyon.** (1953) **7.30** Great British Menu. (R) **8.00** Great British Menu. (R) **8.30** Great British Menu. (R) **9.00** Great British Menu. (R) **9.30** Great British Menu. (R) **10.00** A History of Britain by Simon Schama. (R) **11.00** Meet the Ancestors. (R) **11.30** Map Man. (R) **12.00** Indian Food Made Easy. (R) **12.30** Mastermind. (R) **1.00** University Challenge. (R) **1.30** Talking Pictures. **2.10** **Film: Anchors Aweigh.** (1945) **4.25** Final Score. **5.30** The Great Comic Relief Bake Off. (R)
6.30 **Floy III** James Lewis and Kate Bliss value items in Stroud. (R)
7.00 **Top Gear.** The motoring magazine returns. Jeremy Clarkson builds a small car and pitches the concept in the Dragons' Den, and Damian Lewis is the Star in a Reasonably Priced Car. (R)
8.00 **Dad's Army.** Sergeant Wilm joins the aristocracy. (R)
8.30 **Natural World: Kangaroo Dundee.** Part two of two. Broga continues to raise the three joey he rescued in his one-room tin shack in the Outback, but one of them is seriously ill.
9.30 **Howard Goodall's Story of Music.** The composer examines the extraordinarily fertile musical period between 1650 and 1750, which saw innovations including the orchestra, the overture, modern tuning and the piano. Also on BBC HD at 11pm.
10.30 **QI XL.** With Nina Conti, Sean Lock and Bill Bailey. (R)
11.15 **Film: The Good Shepherd.** (2006) Fact-based spy drama, starring Matt Damon and Robert De Niro.

ITV

6.00 **CITV: Handy Manny.** **6.10** Handy Manny. **6.25** The Hive. (R) **6.35** The Hive. (R) **6.40** Dino Dan. (R) **6.55** Dino Dan. (R) **7.05** Almost Naked Animals. (R) **7.15** Almost Naked Animals. (R) **7.40** Almost Naked Animals. (R) **7.40** Almost Naked Animals. (R) **8.05** Ultimate Spider-Man. **8.30** Victorious. (R) **9.00** Jessie. **9.25** **ITV News.** **9.30** The Jeremy Kyle Show USA. **10.25** The Jeremy Kyle Show USA. **11.20** Saturday Cookbook. (R) **12.20** **ITV News: Weather.** **12.25** Murder, She Wrote. (R) **1.25** Countrywise. (R) **1.40** My Tasty Travels with Lynda Bellingham. (R) **2.40** Dinner Date. (R) **3.45** **Film: The Finestones.** (1994) **5.30** Regional Programme; Weather. **5.45** **ITV News: Weather.** **6.00** **New You've Been Framed!** **Top 100 Talent.**
7.00 **Splash!** The final, which sees the four remaining celebrity divers attempting to somersault, twist and pike their way to victory. Last in the series.
8.30 **Take Me Out.** A guitar teacher, a 999 call operator, a choir leader and a butcher enter the love life in the hope of impressing 30 single women. Paddy McGuinness presents the dating show.
9.45 **The Jonathan Ross Show.** The host chats to comedian Eddie Izzard, broadcaster and naturalist David Attenborough, stand-up-turned-actor Russell Brand and action-film star Dolph Lundgren. With music by Pulp.
10.50 **ITV News: Weather.**
11.05 **Film: Pride and Prejudice.** (2005) Period drama, starring Keira Knightley.
1.25 **Jackpot247.** **2.55** In Plain Sight. (R) **3.40** **ITV Nightscreen.**

CHANNEL 4

6.05 Sali Mali. (R) **6.10** The Hoobs. (R) **6.35** The Hoobs. (R) **7.05** Beach Volleyball. **8.00** The Morning Line. **9.00** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **9.30** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **10.00** Frasier. (R) **10.30** Frasier. (R) **11.00** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **11.30** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **12.00** The Simpsons. (R) **12.30** Undercover Boss Australia. (R) **1.30** **Channel 4 Racing.** **4.00** Come Dine with Me: Ireland. **4.30** Come Dine with Me: Ireland. **5.05** Come Dine with Me: Ireland. **5.35** Come Dine with Me: Ireland.
6.05 **Come Dine with Me: Ireland.** Former lawyer Fiona Buckley, now a nut trader, hopes her belly of pork meat will be enough to win her the 1,000 euro prize as she hosts the final dinner party in Cork.
6.35 **Channel 4 News.**
7.05 **4thought.tv.** People of different faiths talk about how their religion views the consumption of alcohol.
7.10 **Film: Crocodile Dundee.** (1986) An Australian hunter with a larger-than-life reputation accompanies a reporter from the Outback to the urban jungle of Manhattan. Comedy, starring Paul Hogan and Linda Kozlowski.
9.00 **World Without End.** Mother Cecilia sends Caris to France to petition the king, who is desperate to find a way for his army to cross the River Somme, otherwise they will be trapped and under siege.
10.00 **Film: Along Came a Spider.** (2001) Detective thriller, starring Morgan Freeman.
12.05 **Film: Chatroom.** (2010) **1.50** **Film: Petting in the Park.** (2001) Comedy, with Nicole Kidman. **3.20** Hollyoaks. **5.25** Countdown. (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake! **10.00** Power Rangers Samurai. (R) **10.35** Batman: The Brave and the Bold. **11.10** Inside Hollywood 2013. **11.20** The Gadget Show. (R) **12.20** Police Interceptors. (R) **1.20** **Film: Mrs Caldwell's Cabbage War.** (2000) **3.30** **Film: Desperate Escape.** (2009) **5.15** **Film: By Appointment Only.** (2007)
6.50 **5 News Weekend.**
6.55 **NCIS.** (R)
7.45 **NCIS.** Gibbs sends DiNozzo and Ziva on a decoy mission to retrieve top-secret information from a secure military base, in a bid to expose a spy in NCIS. (R)
8.40 **Law & Order.** A cop is murdered during a botched robbery, triggering an investigation that leads Green and Cassidy to a paparazzo who may have compromising photos of a celebrity. (R)
9.40 **Law & Order: Special Victims Unit.** New series. The detectives are forced to rely on an officer from another district when a rape victim refuses to talk to anyone but him, while introductions to the new ADA go badly.
10.40 **Law & Order: Criminal Intent.** New series. Part one of two. Goren and Eames investigate an illegal arms deal.
11.35 **True Crimes: The First 72 Hours.** A sexual predator is caught by behavioural and geographical profiling.
12.05 **SuperCasino.** **4.00** Michaela's Wild Challenge. (R) **4.25** Divine Designs. (R) **4.50** County Secrets. (R) **5.05** Hana's Helpline. (R) **5.15** The Milkshake! Show. (R) **5.40** Thomas & Friends. **5.50** Roary the Racing Car. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Three
7.00 Merlin **7.45** Doctor Who **8.35** **Film: Cool Runnings** (1993). Fact-based sporting comedy, starring John Candy. **10.10** Russell Howard's Good News Extra **10.55** Family Guy **11.40** American Dad!
BBC Four
7.00 Lost Land of the Volcano **8.00** The Treasures of Ancient Rome **9.00** Borgen **11.00** Queens of British Pop
ITV2
5.50 **Film: Toy Story** (1995) **7.35** **Film: Back to the Future Part II** (1989). Sci-fi comedy sequel, starring Michael J Fox. **9.45** Take Me Out - The Gossip **10.30** Fake Reaction **11.15** **Film: Wanted** (2008). Action adventure, starring James McAvoy and Angelina Jolie.
ITV3
2.50 A Touch of Frost **5.00** Agatha Christie's Marple **7.00** Doc Martin **8.00** Midsomer Murders **11.00** **Film: The Graduate** (1967)
ITV4
2.30 Live Africa Cup of Nations. The opening quarter-final (Kick-off 3.00pm). **5.15** Cheers **5.45** World of Sport: Footballing Upsets **6.00** Live Africa Cup of Nations. The second quarter-final (Kick-off 6.30pm). **9.00** Champions League Heroes **10.00** **Film: Nightwatches** (1981)
E4
3.35 Rules of Engagement **6.00** The Big Bang Theory **7.00** Happy Endings **8.00** How I Met Your Mother **8.30** 2 Broke Girls **9.00** **Film: Top Gun** (1986) **11.10** The Big Bang Theory
Film4
3.05 Murder Ahoy (1964) **4.55** Little Manhattan (2005) **6.40** Mona Lisa Smile (2003) **9.00** The A-Team (2010) Action adventure, starring Liam Neeson. **11.20** Orphan (2009)

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What's On!

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SUNDAY'S TV 3.02.13

CHOICE



Brian Cox

Wonders of Life
BBC2, 9pm

Professor Brian Cox is everywhere at the minute. University lecturer by day, stargazer and the Beeb's most intriguing presenter by night, it's little wonder he finds the time to fit it all in. But that he does, and he stretches himself even further as his new series Wonders of Life continues. The physicist is making his way around the globe, on a mission to investigate whether the emergence of life was an inevitable consequence of the physical laws that rule the universe. This week, Brian finds himself doing what most of us often dream of; tripping across America.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. **7.25** Match of the Day. (R) **9.00** The Andrew Marr Show. **10.00** The Big Questions. **11.00** Sunday Politics: Weather for the Week Ahead. **12.25** Countryfile. (R) **1.25** Call the Midwife. (R) **2.25** Live Six Nations Rugby Union. **5.00** Africa. (R) **6.00** BBC News: Regional News; Weather. **6.30** Blandings. David Walliams returns as no-nonsense secretary Baxter. **7.00** Countryfile. Items from the snowy Yorkshire Dales, including cheese-making at Jervaulx Abbey in the style of the Cistercian monks and following a veterinary couple on their farm rounds. Including Weather for the Week Ahead. **8.00** Call the Midwife. Jenny is seconded to a short-staffed hospital in London, but intimidating surgeon Mr Tracey leaves her reluctant to carry out her duties. **9.00** Ripper Street. Reid senses something amiss when a Jewish anarchist is found dead, leading the team into the murky world of the British government's fight against international terrorism. **10.00** BBC News: Regional News; Weather. **10.25** Match of the Day 2. Including highlights of Manchester City v Liverpool. **11.15** Room 101 - Extra Storage. With Cilla Black, Hugh Dennis and Mel Giedroyc. **11.55** The Sky at Night. From the Royal Observatory, Greenwich. **12.15** The Celebrity Apprentice USA. **1.40** Six Nations Rugby Union. **2.25** Weatherview. **2.30** BBC News.

BBC2

6.00 Close. **6.50** Film: A Walk in the Sun. (1945) **8.45** Life in a Cottage Garden with Carol Klein. (R) **9.15** A to Z of TV Gardening. **10.00** Saturday Kitchen Best Bites. **11.30** The Little Paris Kitchen: Cooking with Rachel Khoo. (R) **12.00** EastEnders. (R) **1.55** Coast. **2.10** Natural World: Kangaroo Dundee. (R) **3.10** Natural World: The Great Comic Relief Bake Off. (R) **5.10** Songs of Praise. **5.45** Ski Sunday. **6.30** Orbit: Earth's Extraordinary Journey. Kate Humble and Helen Czerski follow the earth's journey around the sun from the March equinox to the end of June. Last in the series. (R) **7.30** Open All Hours. Granville tries to persuade Arkwright to buy a van, so he does not have to struggle with the shop's outdated delivery bike. (R) **8.00** Top Gear. Jeremy Clarkson, Richard Hammond and James May pilot three front-engined supercars on a road trip from Las Vegas to Palm Springs via Los Angeles. With drummer Mick Fleetwood. **9.00** Wonders of Life. Professor Brian Cox encounters extraordinary creatures in the US as he investigates how the senses evolved, charting life's journey from single-celled organisms to sentient beings. **10.00** A Night with the Stars. Professor Brian Cox explores challenging concepts in physics. (R) **11.00** Live American Football: Super Bowl XLVII. San Francisco 49ers v Baltimore Ravens (Kick-off 11.30pm).

ITV

6.00 CITV: Handy Manny. **6.10** Handy Manny. **6.25** The Hive. (R) **6.35** The Hive. (R) **6.40** Dino Dan. (R) **6.55** Dino Dan. (R) **7.05** Almost Naked Animals. (R) **7.15** Almost Naked Animals. (R) **7.30** Almost Naked Animals. (R) **7.40** Matt Hatter Chronicles. (R) **8.05** Rated A for Awesome. **8.15** Rated A for Awesome. **8.30** Big Time Rush. **9.00** The Aquabats Super Show. **9.25** ITV News. **9.30** House Guest in the Sun. (R) **10.25** 60 Minute Makeover. (R) **11.25** May the Best House Win VIVE la France. (R) **12.25** ITV News; Weather. **12.35** Dickinson's Real Deal. (R) **1.35** Rosemary & Thyme. (R) **2.35** You've Been Framed! (R) **3.05** Film: Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone. (2001) **5.50** Regional Programme; Weather. **6.05** ITV News; Weather. **6.15** Dancing on Ice. **7.45** All Star Family Fortunes. With actress Samantha Womack and McFly's Tom Fletcher. **8.30** Dancing on Ice: The Skate Off. The two lowest-scoring contestants perform new routines, with the judges deciding which couple deserves another chance and a place in next week's show. **9.00** Mr Selfridge. Harry hits rock bottom after a confrontation with Rose, who has received a visit from his mistress Ellen Love, while Agnes falls out with Victor when she returns to the store. **10.00** ITV News at Ten; Weather. **10.15** It'll Be Alright on the Night. Celebrity bloopers with Gift Rhys Jones. (R) **11.15** Anglo-Welsh Cup Rugby Union. **12.10** The Store. **2.15** Monk. (R) **2.55** ITV Nightscreen. **5.05** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R)

CHANNEL 4

6.10 The Hoobs. (R) **6.35** The Hoobs. (R) **6.55** Will & Grace. (R) **7.30** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **7.55** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.25** Frasier. (R) **8.55** Frasier. (R) **9.30** Sunday Brunch. **12.05** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **12.35** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **1.00** The Simpsons. (R) **1.35** The Simpsons. (R) **2.05** Film: Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan. (1982) **4.20** Time Team. **5.20** Deal or No Deal. **6.20** Channel 4 News. **6.50** 4thought.tv. Alcohol consumption and religion. **6.55** The Political Slot. A day in the life of Conservative Party Chairman Grant Shapps. **7.00** Come Dine with Me. A week of dinner parties in Edinburgh, featuring an around-the-world menu, a "sweetie darling" theme and a stab at some Heston Blumenthal-style cooking. **8.00** The Hotel. Mark wants to become more cost-conscious and gives him a chance to prove himself by asking him to organise a wedding fair and oversee a local couple's nuptials. **9.00** Film: Source Code. (2011) Premiere. A pilot investigates a bombing by having his mind transferred into one of the victims for the last eight minutes of his life. Sci-fi thriller, with Jake Gyllenhaal. **10.50** Film: The Accused. (1988) Oscar-winning drama, starring Jodie Foster. **12.55** Film: Rebound. (2005) Comedy, with Mark Lawrence. **2.20** Smallville. **3.00** Coming Up. (R) **3.30** St Elsewhere. **4.15** Deal or No Deal. (R) **5.10** Countdown. (R) **5.55** Quick Bakes with Eric Lanlard.

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake!: Peppa Pig. **6.05** Roary the Racing Car. (R) **6.15** Fifi and the Flowerpots. (R) **6.25** Bert and Ernie's Great Adventures. (R) **6.30** The Mr Men Show. (R) **6.45** Olive the Ostrich. (R) **6.50** Abby's Flying Fairy School. (R) **7.00** Roobarb and Custard Too. (R) **7.10** Bananas in Pyjamas. (R) **7.20** Animal Antics. (R) **7.30** Make Way for Noddy. (R) **7.40** Milkshake! Monkey. (R) **7.45** City of Friends. (R) **7.55** Little Princess. (R) **8.10** The Adventures of Bottle Top Bill and His Best Friend Corky. (R) **8.20** Mio Mao. (R) **8.25** Angelina Ballerina. (R) **8.40** Milkshake! Show Songs. (R) **8.45** Rupert Bear. (R) **9.00** Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom. (R) **9.15** Toby's Travelling Circus. (R) **9.25** Little Lodgers. (R) **9.30** Roary the Racing Car. (R) **9.45** Jolly Jamm. **10.00** Power Rangers Samurai. (R) **10.35** Batman: The Brave and the Bold. **11.10** Looney Tunes. (R) **11.20** Once Upon a Time. (R) **12.20** Film: The Princess Bride. (1987) **2.10** Titanic. (R) **5.25** 5 Weeks Weekend. **5.35** Film: The Witches. (1990) **7.15** Film: The Time Machine. (2002) Sci-fi adventure, based on the HG Wells novel. **9.00** Person of Interest. The Machine directs Reese and Finch to protect a lawyer who specialises in suing on behalf of convicts who claim they were wrongfully imprisoned. **10.00** Film: Rambo. (2008) Action sequel, directed by and starring Sylvester Stallone. **11.45** Ice Road Truckers. (R) **12.45** How Do They Do It? (R) **1.15** SuperCasino. **4.00** Michaela's Wild Challenge. (R) **4.25** Divine Designs. (R) **4.50** County Secrets. (R) **5.05** Hana's Helpline. (R) **5.15** The Milkshake! Show. (R) **5.40** Thomas & Friends. (R) **5.50** Roary the Racing Car. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Three
7.00 Great Movie Mistakes 2011: Not in 3D. **7.05** Wallace & Gromit: The Wrong Trousers. **7.35** Film: Superman Returns (2006). **10.00** Being Human. **11.00** Family Guy. **11.45** American Dad!
BBC Four
7.00 The Story of British Pathé. **8.00** Harlots, Housewives & Heroines: A 17th Century History for Girls. **9.00** Frank Sinatra: The Voice of the Century - Arena Special. **10.35** Film: The Salt of Life (2011)
ITV2
3.55 Take Me Out - The Gossip. **4.40** The Best of You've Been Framed! **5.40** Film: Back to the Future Part II (1990) **8.00** You've Been Framed! Calendar Special. **9.00** The Magulaf Weekender **10.00** Film: The Bourne Identity (2002) **ITVS**
3.35 Agatha Christie's Marple. **5.45** Murder, She Wrote. **6.40** Agatha Christie's Poirot. **9.00** David Jason's Greatest Escapes. **10.00** Film: Schindler's List (1993)
ITV4
2.30 Live Africa Cup of Nations. **5.15** Cheers. **5.45** Greatest Fap Cup Finals. **6.00** Live Africa Cup of Nations. **9.00** Anglo-Welsh Cup Rugby Union. **10.00** The Magnificent Seven (1960)
E4
5.00 Revenge. **6.00** The Big Bang Theory. **7.00** New Girl. **8.00** Film: Romancing the Stone (1984) **10.05** What Happens in Kavos. **11.05** My Mad Fat Diary
Film4
3.05 Because of Winn-Dixie (2005) **5.10** The Honeymooners (2005) **6.55** Shopgirl (2005) Romantic comedy, starring Claire Danes and Steve Martin. **9.00** Assault on Precinct 13 (2005) **11.10** M*A*S*H (1970)

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Zumba Toning	7.45-8.45pm Holy Trinity Wordsley
Zumba	6-7pm Hilton Hall, Lanesfield
Zumba	7.15-8.15pm Hilton Hall, Lanesfield
Tuesday	
Zumba	9.45-10.45am Leisurelee
KSFL	5.30-7.30pm High Areal School
Zumba	6.40-7.40pm High Areal School
Plates	7.45-8.45pm High Areal School
Zumba	6.30-7.30pm
Zumba	Wollescote Community Centre
Zumba	7.45-8.45pm
Zumba	Wollescote Community Centre
Zumba	7.40-8.10
Metalfit	
The Kingswinford School	5.45-6.45pm Thorns Primary School
Zumba	8-9pm Leisurelee Fitness
Wednesday	
Plates	9.45-10.45am Leisurelee
KSFL	6.30-7.30pm High Areal School
Zumba	7.45-8.45pm High Areal School
Zumba	5.45-6.45pm
Zumba	Darkhouse Baptist Church
Zumba	6.30-7.30pm Holy Trinity Wordsley
Ripped... Toned... Sentao	
Metalfit 7.40-8.10	6.30-7.30pm Parkes Hall Social Club
Thursday	
KSFL	9.45-10.45am Leisurelee
Zumba	6.30-7.30pm
Zumba	The Kingswinford School
Zumba	7.45-8.45pm
Zumba	The Kingswinford School
Zumba	6.30-7.30pm
Zumba	Darkhouse Baptist Church
Zumba	6.30-7.30pm Hagley Primary School
Friday	
Zumba Toning	10.15-11am Jubilee Hall
Zumba	6.30-7.30pm Holy Trinity Wordsley
Zumba	6.30-7.30pm
Saturday	
Zumba	9.30-10.30am High Areal School
Zumba	11.15am-12.15pm Leisurelee
Zumbatronics	9.30-10.00 Lil Startz (3-7yrs)
Zumbatronics	The Kingswinford School
Zumbatronics	10.15-11.00 Big Startz (8-12yrs)
Zumbatronics	The Kingswinford School
Sunday	
Zumba	9.45-10.45am Leisurelee

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What's On!

Film Choices

MONDAY

The Punisher, Channel 5, 10pm

FBI agent Frank Castle enrages a powerful gangland kingpin when a gunfight accidentally causes the death of the mobster's son. The crime boss retaliates by wiping out Castle's entire family, but the lawman reinvents himself as a vigilante, acting as judge, jury and executioner to the underworld. Thriller based on the Marvel comic-book anti-hero, starring Thomas Jane, John Travolta, Will Patton, Rebecca Romijn and Roy Scheider. (2004)

TUESDAY

Rumble in the Bronx, BBC1, 11.35pm

A Hong Kong cop visits New York to attend the wedding of his uncle, who has just sold his market store to an entrepreneur. The policeman volunteers to stick around to help get the business running, but they soon fall foul of a local biker gang. Martial arts adventure, starring Jackie Chan, Anita Mui, Francoise Yip and Bill Tung. (1995)



The Matrix Reloaded, Thursday, Channel 5, 10pm

WEDNESDAY

Black Death, BBC1, 11.40pm

As the bubonic plague sweeps across medieval Britain, one isolated community seems to be completely unaffected. A naive monk is sent to accompany a band of mercenaries to the village to determine if they have used witchcraft to ward off the disease. Thriller, starring Sean Bean, Eddie Redmayne and Carice van Houten. (2010)

THURSDAY

The Matrix Reloaded, Channel 5, 10pm

As the machines threaten the last refuge of humanity, a party of freedom fighters journeys into the virtual world of the Matrix to find a means to end the war once and for all. However, the computer programme Agent Smith, once a tool of the machines, has returned from the dead with his own plans for the world. Sci-fi thriller sequel, starring Keanu Reeves, Carrie-Anne Moss, Laurence Fishburne and Hugo Weaving. (2003)

FRIDAY

Bad Boys II, Channel 5, 9pm

Two mismatched undercover cops set out to halt an underground gang war and bring down a drug lord attempting to flood the market with a deadly form of Ecstasy. However, a romantic interlude threatens to drive the investigation off course. Comedy thriller sequel, starring Will Smith, Martin Lawrence, Gabrielle Union, Jordi Molla and Peter Stormare. (2003)

Pick of the Week

Clunes is in the saddle for his new adventure

Martin Clunes couldn't be less like Gary, his Men Behaving Badly character, if he tried.

While Gary would like nothing more than to be drinking with his mate Tony, Martin would prefer to be on his Dorset farm, hanging out with his wife, producer Philippa Braithwaite, their daughter Emily and his ever-growing menagerie of animals.

Martin is besotted by his furry, four-legged friends. In fact, when he isn't making Doc Martin or some other TV drama, he can be found surrounded by them, either at home or while making a documentary.

Over the past few years he's featured in various programmes about dogs and lemuris – just last week he narrated another about canines.

Now he's back with a rather more personal project.

This second string to his media career has come as a surprise, but he loves every minute of it: "It was never part of the plan, but I'd really miss presenting and the opportunities it's given me. It would

be silly of me to say, 'I won't do that because this might spoil my chances of another acting job', because I might miss out on one of the biggest experiences of my life."

Two years ago, Martin adopted a couple of young Clydesdale draught horses – called Bruce and Ronnie – and they're now at an age where they're getting a little bored with just trotting around an empty field; their besotted 'father' describes them as "lovable but uncontrollable teenagers".

To give the duo some focus, Martin has brought in Robert Sampson, an equine expert who will turn 'the boys' into useful working horses – he'll coach Martin how to drive them properly too.

"If you'd said 10 years ago that I would be driving a seven and a half ton truck with my own two young Clydesdales and taking them to hoof camp, I'd have laughed in your face," claims Martin. "But it is a reality and it's very exciting."

Much of the programme is dedicated to following the progress of all three novices, but there's also

a chance to find out how working horses are employed across the globe, including by the Amish and – in stark contrast – Budweiser in America. However, it's a trip to an Italian vineyard that proves most eye-opening.

"A day working in that Italian vineyard is enough for me to think that having working horses on my farm can only be a good thing," laughs Martin, as he watches the animals driving carts while fertilising the land at the same time.

Then it's back to Blighty to see how Ronnie and Bruce are getting along – and the answer is very well. In fact, Martin's gentle, quiet approach to life seems to suit working with the duo rather well.

"I found this new speed quite shocking to begin with, very slow," he admits. "But I have a six month ban on my driving licence, so this speed could be my future – starting at my horses' bums as they plod me around the countryside."

"It's quite a nice way to go. Three cheers I say."



Martin Clunes – Heavy Horse Power, Thursday, ITV, 9pm

Best of the Rest

MONDAY

Dancing on the Edge BBC2, 9pm

If there was ever any doubt that writer-director Stephen Poliakoff's name carries a lot of clout, just look at the cast list for his new drama, which stars everyone from Chiwetel Ejiofor and Matthew Goode to John Goodman and Jacqueline Bisset, via Jane Asher and new Doctor Who assistant Jenna Louise Coleman. Perhaps the impressive cast were also attracted by the plot, which follows a black jazz band in 1930s London. Led by Louis Lester (Ejiofor), the group find a champion in music journalist Stanley (Matthew Goode), and some unlikely fans among the upper class. But even with wealthy patrons on their side, they still have to deal with the racial inequalities and shifting moral values of the time.

Richard III: The King in the Car Park Channel 4, 9pm

It's amazing what you can find in car parks these days: abandoned shopping trolleys, cigarette ends, the skeleton of one history's most infamous monarchs... This documentary looks at the search for the final resting place of Richard III, who was killed at the Battle of Bosworth Field in 1485. His body was buried in Greyfriar's Church in Leicester, but in the centuries that followed, the building was demolished and its exact location was lost to history. But all that changed in 2012 when archaeologists finally worked out that Greyfriar's stood on what is now a council car park. Here, we follow the scientists who are trying to establish if the male skeleton found at the site really is Richard III.

TUESDAY

Brain Hospital: Saving Lives Channel 5, 10pm

As we return to Liverpool's Walton Centre, this inspiring series introduces Martin and Marc who are undergoing brain treatment. Marc suffers from a chronic tremor which became worse during his teens. Surgeons hope that a 'deep brain stimulation' operation will help him control his condition. The engineer has already given up his job and lost the ability to do everyday tasks, so this treatment is crucial. Martin, a university dean and father of three in his fifties who has been diagnosed with cancer is equally optimistic. This operation will hopefully remove the malignant brain tumours, which if left untreated will only spread throughout his body.

WEDNESDAY Live International Football ITV, 7pm

The England national team return to action this evening as they face Brazil in a friendly match at Wembley Stadium, organised as part of the FAs 150th anniversary celebrations. England's last outing was a friendly away to Sweden last November, which will be remembered for the performance of Zlatan Ibrahimovich, who scored all of his team's goals in a 4-2 victory, including

a spectacular over-head volley from long distance. As with that game, the outcome of tonight's clash is not critical, but Roy Hodgson will appreciate the opportunity to gather his squad together for the first time this year, and see this as a good test against quality opposition before resuming the World Cup qualification campaign.

Holiday Hit Squad BBC1, 8pm

You wouldn't want to get on the wrong side of Angela Rippon, Helen Skelton or Joe Crowley. They've made their names in tough-talking telly, so throw them all together on the same project and there's every chance they're quite the force to be reckoned with. This new series combines journalism and travel advice to ensure we're fully clued up in making sure our holidays – no matter where in the world we find ourselves – live up to their promise. As Angela joins the professionals who devote their lives to helping British tourists in Majorca, Helen meets unhappy holidaymakers, and Joe joins hotel inspectors in top holiday hotspots to learn about the hidden horrors.

Holiday Hit Squad, Wednesday, BBC1, 8pm

THURSDAY

How to Build a Bionic Man Channel 4, 9pm

The medical experts featured in this documentary are using £1million-worth of cutting-edge artificial limbs and organs in an attempt to create a bionic man that will then be displayed at London's Science Museum. This summer's Paralympic Games demonstrated how far modern technology has come in its ability to replace body parts and improve abilities, but presenter and psychologist Bertolt Meyer – who has a bionic hand – wants to find out how such technological developments may impact on the human race in the future. Whatever conclusions he draws will be fascinating – but not as intriguing as seeing how the bionic man at the centre of it all turns out.

FRIDAY Ice Road Truckers Channel 5, 8pm

It's Friday night, which only means one thing on Channel 5 – a good dose of heavyweight trucking that frankly makes us thankful for our safe-as-houses desk jobs. And for Dave it's not just the conditions through which he drives that are icy. In Prudhoe, he's having trouble making friends with his new colleagues, and when his brakes freeze, he's given little help by his fellow drivers. Things are going a little better for Lisa, though, when she's given the responsibility of driving half of the biggest load of the season so far. Meanwhile Alex Debogorski is given an 800-mile three-day trip to deliver vital food supplies to a remote outpost in Tadooule Lake.

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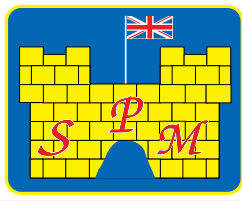
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WORDSLEY CHAPEL STREET £425 pcm Ground Floor Flat, Lounge, Kitchen, One Bedroom, Bathroom, Gas Central Heating, Double Glazing, Unfurnished, Available End June	GORNAL TEMPLE STREET £525 pcm Terrace Property, Lounge, Kitchen/Diner, Two Bedrooms, Bathroom, Gas Central Heating, Rear Garden, Unfurnished	WORDSLEY LAWNSWOOD ROAD £610 pcm Terraced Cottage, Lounge, Dining Room, Kitchen, Bathroom with Shower, Two Bedrooms, Bathroom, Gas Central Heating, Double Glazing, Rear Garden	DUDLEY DIBDALE STREET £575 pcm End Terrace Property, Lounge, Dining Room, Kitchen, Two Double Bedrooms, Loft Room, Gas Central Heating, Double Glazing, Unfurnished EPC-E
DUDLEY STOURBRIDGE ROAD £525 pcm Flat, Lounge, Kitchen, Three Double Bedrooms, Bathroom, Gas Central Heating, Double Glazing, Unfurnished, Off Road Parking	LOWER GORNAL MOUNT CLOSE £625 pcm Semi Detached Property, Lounge/Diner, Kitchen, Three Bedrooms, Bathroom, Gas Central Heating, Double Glazing, Unfurnished, Front & Rear Gardens, Off Road Parking EPC-D	WOODSETTON FLAVELL STREET £560 pcm Terrace Property, Lounge, Dining Room, Kitchen, WC, Three Bedrooms, Bathroom, Gas Central Heating, Double Glazing, Rear Garden, Off Road Parking EPC-D	GREAT BRIDGE EAGLE PLACE £370 pcm Modern Apartment, Entrance Hall, Lounge, Kitchen, One Bedroom, Bathroom, Electric Heating, Double Glazing, Off Road Parking EPC-D

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This newly-built stone-fronted cottage near Bridgnorth is on the market with All Morris for £250,000

A RECENTLY-BUILT individual stone-fronted cottage in a village outside Bridgnorth is for sale priced at £250,000.

The accommodation at Apple Tree Cottage, Chorley, briefly comprises of three bedrooms, family bathroom, 20ft through lounge, kitchen with range of integral appliances, hall and guest cloakroom and side garage – and with south-facing gardens.

The property was built around 2006 for the current owner and is fitted out

to an exacting standard, set back behind a gated gravel driveway and stone wall and with a neat front garden.

Inside a reception hall has a central feature staircase and landing, and there is a guest cloakroom with white suite including vanity unit.

The lounge/dining room has a log effect gas fire with double doors to the garden patio and also to the fitted kitchen with a range of cabinets and integrated appliances including electric double oven, ceramic hob, canopy

hood, fridge freezer and dishwasher. On the first floor are three bedrooms, the bigger two with built-in wardrobe/closet space, while the bathroom has a white suite of shower, wash hand basin, panelled bath and WC.

The side garage is of larger than average size with plumbing for automatic washing machine, while to the rear is a paved patio terrace and two steps up to a lawned garden with countryside views.

Call Allan Morris on 01562 519079 for further information.

Great ideas come from outside the storage box

It's not too late to make a New Year's resolution to tackle the clutter in your home. Gabrielle Fagan comes up with some smart and good-looking storage solutions

STYLISH storage has suddenly been transformed into a stunning addition for any home. Our desire for streamlined, contemporary interiors means we're demanding attractive and imaginative ways of dealing with today's ultimate interiors sin - clutter. Designers are responding by creating solutions which store possessions efficiently - and make a style statement at the same time.

"Many of us have to live in homes much smaller than we might desire," says interior designer Joanna Wood (www.joannawood.co.uk). Generally, we also underestimate the number of possessions we have by about a third, which can lead to a storage conundrum. But that doesn't mean you have to abandon your design ideals.

"With thought and careful planning you can make the most of every inch of space using beautiful solutions combining function and good looks."

A calm atmosphere is essential in living areas. Open shelves and cupboard storage can allow treasured and decorative items to star while everything else is concealed but to hand.

"In contemporary interiors there's no room for jarring clutter," says Wood. "Storage has become an art form which enhances rooms and is at the top of the list when designing an interior."

Sleek doors which open at a touch are popular, while others have handles that are a feature in themselves and made in materials such as leather, mother-of-pearl or crystal.

Lists

"The key to success is to recognise no space is too small to store something. Every corner, recess or landing can be utilised to provide a home for belongings. Even stair treads can be transformed into drawers."

Imagine you're a visitor to your home and look at your possessions objectively. Make lists of items you could discard, current storage that needs de-cluttering and an area which could be used for new storage. Avoid fitting hand-height flat surfaces as it's all too easy to fill them with objects that never get moved.

A bespoke system which caters for every storage need is hard to beat. A contemporary Cream Lounge system



Organised, but at a price! For the ultimate in home storage solutions have a look at this cream lounge library, from £3,000 by Neville Johnson

starts from around £3,000, Neville Johnson.

It's vital that a home office feels organised and conducive to work in. This room will often be multi-purpose and used by different members of the family as a den or homework area as well as an office, and ideally each person will need their own allocated storage," says Wood.

"Nowadays, these are planned down to the last inch in the same way as fitted kitchens. Enclosing everything within fitted cupboard doors reduces distractions and makes the whole area feel organised."

If a whole room's not available, she advises making the most of an awkwardly shaped area, such as a loft or under the stairs, with built-in storage for an office. Use wasted space behind a door or on the wall over a desk by hanging organisers with pockets.

A wall-hung board like Vitra Utensilo White, from £173.40, Heal's, with its integral solid pockets, is ideal for clutter which would normally litter a desktop.

Having problems sleeping in a bedroom that's bulging at the seams with clothes? Both are sure signs that your storage is inadequate.

"This is a room where you want a tranquil, calm atmosphere and as little clutter as possible," says Emma Sims-Hilditch, partner at furniture company

Neptune. Try to have in it only the things you need, rather than allowing it to become a part-time ironing room or office. The investment of commissioning built-in bedroom furniture is worthwhile if you plan to stay in your home for the foreseeable future."

Calculate your storage requirements (how many metres of hanging and folded storage you need, and don't forget space for shoes), before visiting a bedroom furniture specialist. "A divan bed with fitted drawers or under-bed storage boxes can provide valuable extra storage."

Consider raising the height of your wardrobe rail so you can fit storage boxes or a shoe rack beneath hanging clothes.

Learn

Children's rooms seem to shrink as the inhabitants grow and gather their multitude of toys and possessions. "Children have more need for storage than anyone else. But whatever solution you choose it should be easy for them to use so they can learn as early as possible to do their own tidying," says Wood.

Modular storage systems, which can be added to as the child and its possessions grow, are a good solution.

Position drawers close to the floor so children can reach them. Also look for soft close actions on drawers and storage boxes.

TOWN & COUNTRY

PROPERTY SERVICES

HIGH STREET WOLLASTON



£580.00PCM

A well presented two bedroom semi detached property situated in a popular residential location close to the village of Wollaston. Accommodation comprises: Lounge, Kitchen/Diner, Utility Room, two Bedrooms and Bathroom with Shower. The property further benefits from gas central heating, front and rear gardens and driveway affording off road parking. UNFURNISHED EPC RATING = D DSS: NO CHILDREN: YES PETS: MAY CONSIDER SMOKERS: NO

HUNGARY HILL STOURBRIDGE



£575PCM

A three bedroom semi detached property situated in a popular residential location with accommodation to comprise of: Porch, Lounge, dining room, fitted kitchen, utility room, three bedrooms and bathroom. The property further boasts double glazing, gas central heating, front and rear gardens, garage and driveway affording off road parking. UNFURNISHED EPC RATING = D DSS: NO CHILDREN: YES PETS: NO SMOKERS: NO

PARK LANE HALESOWEN



£550PCM

An extremely well presented two bedroom semi detached property situated in a popular residential location. Accommodation comprises of: Entrance hall, Lounge, fitted Kitchen Diner, Utility area, understairs storage, Downstairs WC, two bedrooms and family bathroom. The property further benefits from having gas central heating, double glazing, off road parking and enclosed rear garden which is laid to lawn. UNFURNISHED EPC RATING = D DSS: NO CHILDREN: YES PETS: NO SMOKERS: NO



BIRCHWOOD WALK KINGSWINFORD

A spacious and well maintained, modern semi detached two bedroom bungalow situated in a popular residential location with accommodation to comprise of: Reception hall, lounge, Kitchen, two bedrooms and bathroom. The property further benefits from having gas central heating, double glazing, and to the rear of the property there is an attractive rear garden and garage. PART FURNISHED EPC RATING = D DSS: NO CHILDREN: YES PETS: NO SMOKERS: NO

£525PCM



CHAPEL STREET LYE



£500PCM

A spacious three bedroom link detached property situated in a popular residential location with accommodation to comprise of: Entrance hall, cloakroom, lounge, kitchen, three bedrooms and bathroom. The property further benefits from having double glazing, electric heating, enclosed rear garden with patio area and blocked paved driveway to the fore affording off road parking. UNFURNISHED EPC RATING = E DSS: NO CHILDREN: YES PETS: NO SMOKERS: NO

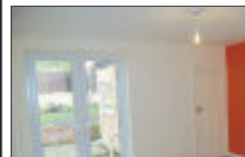
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£495PCM



HIGH STREET HARBOURNE



£495PCM

A Spacious two bedroom first floor flat situated in a busy High Street location with accommodation to comprise of: Entrance hall, lounge, kitchen area, two bedrooms and bathroom. The property further benefits from having gas central heating, double glazing, double decked rear terrace and rear access with staircase to first floor. UNFURNISHED EPC RATING = D DSS: NO CHILDREN: YES PETS: NO SMOKERS: NO

TIMES SQUARE MERRY HILL



£495PCM

An extremely well presented unfurnished one bedroom apartment situated in the heart of the Merry Hill Centre close to all amenities. Accommodation comprises of Video entry system, entrance hall, fitted kitchen, lounge, bedroom and bathroom. The property further benefits from having electric heating and double glazing and allocated parking space. UNFURNISHED EPC RATING = D DSS: NO CHILDREN: NO PETS: NO SMOKERS: NO

REDHOLME COURT REDHILL



£475PCM

An Unfurnished two bedroom first floor apartment located within walking distance of Stourbridge Town Centre. Accommodation to comprise of: Entrance door with security code, private entrance hall, lounge with feature fireplace, fitted kitchen with cooker, bathroom, two bedrooms and ample storage cupboards. The property further benefits from night storage heating, communal gardens and single garage. UNFURNISHED EPC RATING = D DSS: NO CHILDREN: NO PETS: NO SMOKERS: NO

REDDALL HILL ROAD CRADLEY HEATH



£475pcm

An extremely well presented two bedroom first floor apartment with accommodation to comprise entrance hall, lounge, fitted kitchen, two bedrooms and bathroom. The property further benefits from double glazing, electric heating and allocated parking space. UNFURNISHED EPC RATING = C DSS: NO CHILDREN: MAY CONSIDER PETS: NO SMOKERS: NO

SCOTT STREET GREAT BRIDGE



£425PCM

A Second Floor One bedroom Apartment in a popular modern development. Accommodation comprises Lounge, Kitchen with oven and hob, Bedroom and Bathroom with over bath shower. The Property further benefits from Double Glazing, Electric Heating and Allocated Parking. UNFURNISHED EPC RATING = C CHILDREN: NO PETS: NO SMOKERS: NO DSS: No

HALEY COURT SUMMER STREET KINGSWINFORD



£425PCM

A part furnished one bedroom flat situated in a popular residential location with accommodation to comprise of: Entrance hall, lounge, bathroom and kitchen. The property further benefits from having double glazing and central heating. There is also an allocated car parking space along with additional spaces for visitors. PART FURNISHED EPC RATING = C DSS: NO CHILDREN: NO PETS: NO SMOKERS: NO

DADFORD VIEW BRIERLEY HILL



£395PCM

An extremely well presented two bedroom modern mid-terraced property situated in a popular residential location. Accommodation comprises of Entrance hall, lounge/diner, kitchen two bedrooms and bathroom. The property further benefits from majority double glazing and allocated parking for two cars. UNFURNISHED EPC RATING = D DSS: NO CHILDREN: YES PETS: NO SMOKERS: NO

QUAYSIDE CLOSE OLDBURY



£360PCM

A well presented One Bedroom first floor apartment. Located within three quarters of a mile of Oldbury town centre. The property benefits from a security intercom system to the ground floor entrance with a staircase leading to the first floor. The property comprises of: Lounge, Fitted Kitchen, Bedroom and Bathroom. The property also benefits from night storage and convector heating as well as Double Glazing and allocated parking. UNFURNISHED EPC RATING = C DSS: NO CHILDREN: NO PETS: NO SMOKERS: NO

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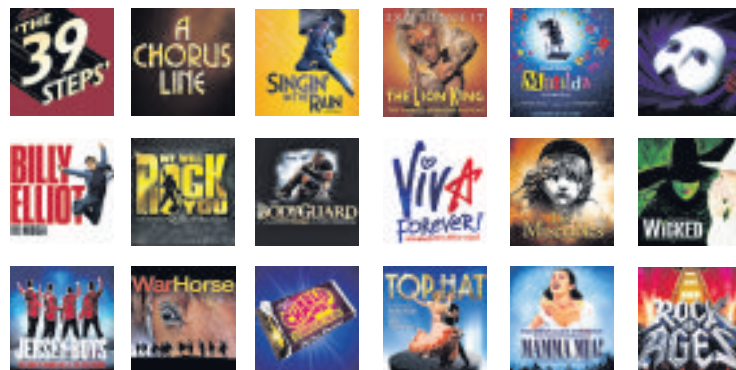
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FORD KA, 2001, 62K, tax, MoT, colour coded, £750. 07778 294979.

FORD KA COLLECTION, 2002, colour coded bumpers, 6 months MoT, good condition, £750 ono. 07747 155364

NISSAN MICRA 1000S, 2001, 3 door, tax, MoT, 84,000 miles, fish, good 1st car or run about, £395 ono. 07745 444291.

PEUGEOT 206 1.4LX, 2000, 3 door, new MoT, 6 months tax, 105k, good condition. £750. 07958 768030.

ROVER 45, 03 reg, auto, MoT May, tax March, 59k, all electric, £650 ono. 07931 319051.

ROVER 75 Connoisseur, 03, auto, diesel Estate, 11 months MoT, tax August, 110k, very good condition, £1,400. 07913 671164

VAUXHALL ASTRA EST 1.6, Auto, 52 reg, 84k, Tax/MoT £895. Genuine calls only. 07730 899325

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Elegance, 2001, 5-dr, blue metallic, only 30k, aircon, fish, electric, two owners, recent cambelt, tyres front pads, MoT May, tax October, £1,550 ono

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VOLKSWAGEN GOLF CL diesel, 1900, 10 months MoT, drives perfect, alloys, CD player, bargain, £575. 01902 789624.

CITROEN BERLINO Diesel Van, 2002, long MoT and tax, very clean and tidy, £580. 07979 733558

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07922 176792.

VAUXHALL ASTRA 1.6 Club Twinport, 05, full MoT, tax, 1 owner, 99k, service history, silver, new shape, immaculate, £2,650 ono. 07346 498946 - 0121 225503.

VAUXHALL ASTRA 1.4 11VVT
Twin top (Design) 2007, 62,000 miles, black sapphire, abs, e/v, airbag, e/m, a/c, fish, alarm, long MoT, metallic paint, c/l, pas, tax, alloys, stereo, CD, spots, petrol, keyless entry, auto lights, auto wipers, 1/2 leather interior, start/stop button.
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VAUXHALL CORSA CLUB 1.4
Auto, 2009, 18,000 miles, tax May 2013, MoT Nov 2013, aircon, electric windows, electric mirrors, £5,095 ono. 01902 865389.

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Auto, 2009, 18,000 miles, tax May 2013, MoT Nov 2013, air con, electric windows, electric mirrors, £5,295 ono. 01902 865389.

VAUXHALL CORSA, 2008, diesel, hatchback, blue, 1.3, 5dr, 43,305 miles, full service history, MoT and tax, £5,295 ono. 07809 412650.

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3 door, 56 plate, 44,000 miles, metallic grey, abs, electric windows, air bag, electric mirrors, air con, fish, alarm, long MoT, metallic paint, central locking, pas, tax, alloys, stereo, CD, petrol, serviced, new tyres, well looked after car.

£3,100 ono.
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(T&C's below)

SINGLE LADIES

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LIZ 42, black, divorced, seeking male, 44-54 for kind, sincere, honest, open relationship. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 400949 §

JANINE petite cute female who loves meals in/out, romantic strolls, WLTm interesting appreciative, independent man for life. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 400803

JULIE 30's female looking for some much needed tlc with similar laidback male. Likes nights in/out, socialising, romance etc, call me. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 400487

62YR old female, widowed, small, slim, attractive, kind, outgoing, likes meals out, dancing, holidays, nights in, seeking professional gent. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 394106 §

KATHY 38yrs, knows what she wants out of life, wltm similar genuine male to wine/dine enjoy travel, share ambitions and hopefully fall in love with. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 400793

CHANTELLE 40yr old slim sensual confident female who loves to party, seeking older male for fun dates without complications. Any age/race. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 400465

JACKIE lonely discreet 30's female with many interests, WLTm kind professional male to share nice times with. Status/age/looking unimportant. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 400451

GRACE Jones lookalike, black lady, 5ft 11ins, OHAC, WLTm male, 45-65, 6ft plus for relationship. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 397681

CAROL 37 attractive slim blonde, curves in all the right places, nice personality, good company, looking for caring fun man for fun times. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 400263

CLARE 37 attractive slim with long dark hair and big brown eyes, WLTm genuine male who is honest, sincere and won't waste my time or break my heart. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 400199

TRACY 26, pretty petite brunette, possibly looking for LTR but definitely looking for fun times with outgoing guy. Any age/looks. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 397027

CLARE 38, single mum, curvy hour glass, loves to be tactile, OHAC, WLTm caring male for LTR. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 399047 §

PAULA 37, WLTm male companion for meals out, social drinking, weekends away, hopefully leading to a meaningful friendship with benefits! Any age. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 398503

MICHELLE 39yr old nurse, slim, petite, blonde, blue eyes, looking to enjoy life with similar romantic, caring guy. Single dad welcome. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 398349

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MARIA French female looking for mutually convenient companionship, very friendly, very discreet and very interested in meeting with you! Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 397451 §

LUCY beautiful big bottomed black female, very tactile, seeks mature honest white male for loving fun times. Call me. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 397389

KATHERINE 38, attractive, single, very lonely and looking for love, fun and male companionship. pls get in touch. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 397123

Hi I'm Natalie 24, pretty, friendly, single, seeking energetic man for romantic walks, cosy nights in and fun-loving relationship. Any age/looks/race. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 397489 §

TINA young attractive 27yr old single female looking for older friendly loving male for adult fun and good times. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 397563

BEV 30yr old curvy attractive female, likes music, travel, animals, cosy nights in front of a log fire, looking for affectionate male for good times. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 397535

MICHELLE attractive 30's female, blonde, leggy and very much single, seeking quality company, hopefully more with nice romantic male. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 395717

BUBBLY female, 42, young at heart, honest, caring, likes outdoors, cinema, theatre, meals out, seeks likeminded male/soul mate, 40-50. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 395919

VICKY honest caring female 33yrs, GSOH, loves meals in/out, travel, cinema, WLTm someone to enjoy nice things in life with and romance. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 383911

DENISE tall leggy good looking single mum, easygoing, enjoys nights in/out, animals, WLTm tall male for fun times possibly more. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 391873

JENNY blonde eyed cuddly independent female, loves countryside, animals, cooking, WLTm older male to spoil and look after. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 378481

MAUREEN seeks male 32-45 for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 323543 §

FUN loving lady, outgoing, honest, caring, likes socialising, seeks older male, 50-70. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 383325

SHAPLEY attractive, light skinned black female, 39, seeks attractive, fit, male, 30's, builder type, tanned, rugged for relationship. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 231152

LOUISE 43, 5ft 5ins, medium build, GSOH, kind, caring, honest, genuine, loving, WLTm male, 43-55 with similar qualities for LTR. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 376165 §

SUSIE gorgeously feminine and sensual, loves lazy summer days, misses male companionship WLTm someone with sense of adventure and lust for life. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 394117

KAREN witty female who loves to laugh, WLTm similar male to share interests, romance, cosy nights in and more. Pls call. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 393125

WIDOW 70, genuine, kind, caring, laidback, seeking male for friendship. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 387013

MANDY 36, size 10, looking for relationship with open-minded man. Status unimportant. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 360317 §

ALICIA 19yr old green eyed female, very attractive, slim, long hair, independent, looking for fun with mature male, no time wasters. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 390059

I'M Julie 36yrs old, attractive, fit, blonde, solvent with OHAC seeking man to spoil and enjoy good times. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 395051

EASYGOING down to earth female, likes cooking, exploring new things in life, seeks male. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 386893 §

LADY young 60, outgoing, friendly, smart, likes cinema, shopping, meals out, seeks similar female friends for days out and evenings. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 387117

PAULINE attractive petite nurse, loves evenings in/out, looking for honest male to share loving friendship and good times. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 379535

BLONDE attractive educated lady 50, young minded, seeks professional tall male, 45-55, for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 391818 §

CATHY is a slim attractive lady with an open minded attitude to life, she WLTm a man of any age. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 395657

61YR old lady 5ft 2ins, medium build, long dark hair, smoker, seeks smart gent who wants to get out and about for good times. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 396409

SINGLE MEN

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Ladies Text n' Chat. Text in now and chat to local people. Send : **CHAT207 To : 65125.** (T&C's below).

MALE 50, genuine, honest, many interests, seeks female for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 394232

MICHAEL 50, nice eyes, seeking female companion for holidays and weekends away, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 401479 §

STEVE 60, likes sports, meals out, seeks similar female for permanent relationship. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 401441

STEVE single dad, slim, 45, looking for girl who wants fun times. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 400257 §

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RICHARD 48, dark hair, brown eyes, olive skin, WLTm lady, 40-50 for LTR, size unimportant. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 401431 §

ATTRACTIVE tall, Indian professional male, GSOH, easygoing, likes sports, socialising, good company, seeks female with GSOH who enjoys life. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 401385

TALL mature, solvent male, seeks to wine and dine younger lady. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 401241

YOUNG 70's male, widower, own transport, active in business, likes weekends away, seeks honest, caring female. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 401203

RICHARD 39, honest, caring, likes cosy nights in/out, seeks lady, 35-40 for good times in and out. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 401145 §

IAN 6ft, likes meals out, weekends away, seeks female, Midlands. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 394134 §

IAN tall, medium build, brown hair, blue eyes, caring, genuine, loving, tender, happy go lucky, likes music, theatre, meals out, romantic nights in, seeks similar female. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 401065 §

DAVE happy go lucky, sociable, seeks attractive young lady, 35-40 to pamper and cook for. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 401043 §

NEW Year new start. Romantic white male, 47, 5ft 11ins, likes holidays, keep fit, music, cinema, seeks female. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 401013

KEITH white male, 49, handsome, 6ft 2ins, seeks buxom black female. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 394094 §

MALE 39, 6ft 2ins, honest, loyal, caring nature, seeks similar female with view to permanent, loving relationship. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 400703 §

FRANK tall, distinguished 68yr old mature, professional gent, sensual, tactile, seeks similar, warm, responsive lady. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 400967

KARL 28, black hair, brown eyes, smart, 5ft 3ins, seeking female for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 400953

PAUL 52, looking for friendship, possible relationship with someone who can make me happy in 2013. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 400849 §

MALE 60, 5ft 10ins, loving, caring, seeking genuine female, any age, 40-60 for relationship. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 400513 §

MALE seeking blonde female, 55-60 for discreet adult fun. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 400435 §

COLIN 62, divorced, many interests, GSOH, seeking slim, attractive, 50's female for companionship, maybe LTR. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 400389 §

MALE 58, good looking, placid, seeks honest, loyal, caring female with view to becoming soul mates. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 400313 §

MALE fun, outgoing, easy-going, seeking female for good times. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 393346 §

COLIN 62, divorced, many interests, GSOH, seeking slim, attractive, 50's female for companionship, maybe LTR. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 400389 §

GARY 46, loyal, genuine, GSOH, down to earth, seeking attractive lady for relationship. South Shrops/North Herefordshire. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 400237

STEVE 49, fed up, seeking female for fun and friendship, possible LTR. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 393218 §

57YR old male, good looking, seeking female for fun times and nights in. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 397463

GARY 39, seeks female, 30-50 for LTR and fun. Single mum welcome. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 398747 §

FRIENDLY guy 49, tall, fit, GSOH, attractive, seeks lady for discreet fun. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 399091 §

TAYLOR 50, tall, athletic, GSOH, WLTm female, attractive, curvy for friendship, maybe more, food, communication, evenings out, travel. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 399067 §

STEVE 54, attractive, seeks older lady, 55-75 for mutual adult fun. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 399755 §

CARL 40, likes DVDs, seeks female for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 393766 §

COVENTRY male, 42, 6ft 1ins, caring, romantic nature, seeks female, single mum welcome, 25-55, any nationality/Foreign for nice times in and out. Genuine replies only. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 398671

BRIAN 60's, intelligent, many interests, loving, affectionate, WLTm West Mids lady for sharing occasional meetings/weekends. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 400115 §

52YR old single parent, 5ft 11ins, slim, likes most things, walks, nights out, cinema, animals, seeks caring, honest, trustworthy female. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 400039 §

BRIAN 73, fit, N/S, own home, likes walks, cycling, meals out, nights in, holidays, travel, seeks genuine, caring female. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 399667

GAY SINGLES

IF YOU'RE LOOKING to meet or chat to other men, look no further. TXT: **GAY247 to 65125**
www.localgaydate.co.uk

STEVE 54, bi, non scene, seeking guy of similar age or older for fun and friendship. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 401465 §

OLDER male, outgoing, sporty, seeking younger man for fun and friendship, slim-medium build, active, hairy. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 401225 §

CD 70 plus seeking CD 70 plus for friendship. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 393208 §

MALE 34, attractive, 5ft 10ins, blue eyes, blond hair, seeks slim male for friendship. Any area, can travel. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 311892 §

GAY male, 34, slim, toned, seeking older guy for fun, friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 395735 §

MALE 44, seeking male, 18-23 for fun relationship. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 391626 §



Women TEXT FOR FUN!

*see t&c's below. No meetings implied or guaranteed. Texts cost £1.50 per message Help Desk: 0844 445 7707

GUYS TEXT FOR FUN. SEND JPRES followed by the box number of the person you wish to chat to and send to 66888 (T&C's below)

NATALIA, naughty but nice! Chat to me about anything you wish. Text JPRES 204332 to 66888

JULIET, just left Boarding School, mature 18yrs seeking fun chat with guys. Text JPRES 203779 to 66888

SINGLE mum, bored at home, why not chat to me. Text JPRES 204464 to 66888

JANET, Glamorous grannie, v young looking, 58 yrs, would love to chat to you. Text JPRES 204219 to 66888

CALLING all men, Jasmine is at home with the phone in her hand, awaiting your calls, she is 28yrs and is vibrant, attractive and fun loving. Text JPRES 204144 to 66888

JESSICA is a blonde bombshell, just waiting to chat to you. Text JPRES 203858 to 66888

PAULA is a petite black lady with a generous smile and luscious dark hair. Give her a call today. Text JPRES 203671 to 66888

TONI, stuck at home with nothing to do, pick up the phone send her a text. Text JPRES 203946 to 66888

STRONG minded lady, seeks easygoing, gentle type man to boss around! Why not text me. Text JPRES 204182 to 66888

Men TEXT FOR FUN!

*see t&c's below. No meetings implied or guaranteed. Texts cost £1.50 per message Help Desk: 0844 445 7707

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SINGLE Dad, sincere and caring hopes that a nice single mum wants to chat with him, send texts etc. Text JPRES 204449 to 66888

ROGER is a solvent, business gent, very rich and generous, would love to romance a special lady of any age. Text JPRES 204413 to 66888

JON, Genuine caring man, give him a call and a have a chat. All texts will be returned. Text JPRES 204416 to 66888

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CHRONICLE

MOTORING

ON THE ROAD TO A BETTER DEAL

Octavia's a big player for Skoda

By Ian Donaldson

If you want to know how important the new Octavia is to Skoda's continuing growth you needed to see the small army of people spending a month in the Portuguese sun.

They were everywhere, helping guide 1,000 motoring writers from around the world to the dining room at the hotel, the conference room, the breakfast room... the check-in desk at the airport and the orange juice and cakes at the coffee stop on the test route.

Some of Skoda's support drivers had spent three days ferrying a fleet of big Superb saloons several thousand kilometres from their native Czech Republic to the guaranteed frost-free climes of southern Portugal, to chauffeur writers from airport to hotel for their one-night stays.

Then you discover that 44 in every Skodas built are Octavias and more than 3.7 million have been sold since the first ones arrived in



The new Skoda Octavia, which arrives in the UK on March 16

1996. Skoda's ambitious plans for the years ahead would derail if Octavia sales softened.

So it's no surprise that Octavia mark three, which reaches the UK on March 16, is no mould breaker. It's simply bigger, bolder and better than before; moving the game on without upsetting potential purchasers with anything too radical.

It's based on the same new, and wildly expensive to develop, underpinning seen in the latest VW Golf (and new Audis and Seats too) and comes with a series of petrol and diesel engines aimed at stretching visits to the pumps and cutting nasties from the exhaust, to the benefit of the environment and an owner's wallet.

The new Octavia is 90mm (3.5in) longer than before but, crucially the distance between front and rear wheels is stretched 108mm (4.2in), with the extra space given to rear seat legroom and an ever bigger boot.

The old Octavia is a hit in China, where they like room in the rear. They're going to love the new one, as are UK taxi firms and families with teenage children and masses of luggage.

Skoda long ago stopped fighting for the

cheaper end of the car market, concentrating instead on value (the M&S philosophy, you could say) and must have decided there's a big enough jump in quality and design to stand a significant price rise.

That means the new range starts at £15,990 for a 1.2-litre petrol model, a stiff £2,605 rise on before. The car on test, a 1.6 diesel in mid-level SE trim and a likely big seller, has risen £1,740 to £19,240, with the new range-topping 2.0 diesel automatic up a more modest £785 to £23,240.

Standard

Skoda says the entry-level new car has £3,500 of extra equipment as standard, including alloy wheels, DAB radio, extra airbags, remote central locking, touchscreen for the sound system and an eco-boosting stop/start system.

Octavia estates have always been popular and a version is mere months away. Later in the year we'll see the go-faster vRS model make its appearance, promising to be the fastest Octavia yet.

The most economical Octavia yet, also arrives in 2013, with a GreenLine model.



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The new Nissan Qashqai 360 replaces the mid-range n-tec+. Prices start from £19,945

Nissan creates new edition to join the Qashqai line-up

NISSAN has created a new edition of the best-selling Qashqai crossover.

The 360 replaces the mid-range n-tec+ trim level and offers more equipment for the same sub-£20,000 starting list price.

Although the name suggests that the 360-degree parking camera system called Around View Monitor is new, it was already fitted to the n-tec+.

The 360 improves on the kit list with part-leather trim and double white stitching, a gloss black gearlever surround, gloss black door handles and a leather armrest.

On the outside, gloss black roof rails and '360' badges identify the new arrival.

As before, 18in alloy wheels, a panoramic roof and privacy glass around the rear of the car are standard features.

All engines and transmission options are to be made available in the 360, both in the Qashqai and the seven-seat '4+2' variant.

Petrol choices consist of 1.6- and 2.0-litre units with manual and continuously variable transmissions, while there are 1.5-, 1.6- and 2.0-litre diesel on hand.

The likely best-seller in the UK is

the front-wheel drive 1.6-litre dCi diesel with stop-start technology, which records a CO₂ output of 119g/km and scores 62.8mpg on the standard European test cycle.

The 360 is on sale now, starting at £19,945 for the 1.6 petrol with a five-speed manual gearbox.

The cheapest diesel, a 1.5-litre 109bhp unit with a six-speed manual transmission, costs £21,645. That then rises to £23,145 for the expected best-selling 1.6 diesel.

Most expensive of the 360s is the £25,895 2.0-litre diesel, which with 148bhp is linked only to an automatic transmission and four-wheel drive.

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Official Government Environment Data. Fuel consumption figures mpg (litres/100km) and CO₂ emissions (g/km). Chevrolet Spark Range: Urban 42.8 (6.6), Extra Urban 67.3 (4.2), Combined 55.4 (5.1) CO₂ emissions 119g/km. Chevrolet Aveo Range: Urban 34.0 (8.3) - 67.2 (4.2), Extra Urban 55.3 (5.1) - 85.6 (3.3), Combined 44.8 (6.3) - 78.4 (3.6), CO₂ emissions 147 - 95g/km.

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I'm ready for the pressure, says skipper

ASHLEY MORRIS is ready to handle the pressure of leading Dudley Heathens into action this year.

Morris takes over the captaincy of the former Cradley club following the departure of Adam Roynon.

The 18-year-old was handed the No.1 race jacket by the outgoing skipper at a club function.

He knows how tough it's going to be as he doubles-up with Premier League Workington - and he's up for the challenge.

He said: "I'm happy to be back. Obviously it's going to be a big year

for me with Workington and Dudley, where I am No.1 and captain. I'm really looking forward to it and I just can't wait for the season to start now.

"I normally manage to deal with pressure reasonably well. I know being No. 1 and captain will be some more pressure, but I'll just carry on as usual and it should be OK.

"I just want to keep the lads' spirits high all the way through the season and score good points. If I'm doing that then that's all that counts, really.

"It will spur me on, obviously,

Dudley Heathens

having some guys like Lewis Blackbird chasing me for my No.1 spot. It will be a challenge but I'm definitely planning on keeping that spot for the whole season!"

Morris will be joined by Dan Greenwood, Gareth Isherwood, Paul Starke, Lewis Blackbird, Max Clegg and Nathan Greaves.

Only Morris and Greenwood are survivors from the rampant 2012 team that had to be decimated due to the team-building points ceiling, but the captain is confident

they can go one better and lift the title.

"It looks like it will be a good team," he said. "Hopefully we will have a good team atmosphere like we had last year, and if we have that then I think that can be the key.

"I'll give the youngsters at reserve as much help as I can as well. Obviously I was where they are only a couple of years ago. They look like they've got good potential, so we'll see how it goes.

"Everyone is aiming for the league title. We want to be winners and we will be aiming for it just as

much as we were last year. I just hope we can pull it off this time."

Tickets are on sale for the season launch party at Cradley Heath Liberal Club on Friday, March 1.

All the 2013 Heathens will be introduced and presented with their race jackets. There will be photograph and autograph opportunities for supporters and a disco.

The event also includes a raffle and auction. Tickets cost £3 HSSC members and £5 non-members and are available online at dudleyheathens.co or by calling HSSC on 07766 745681. All money raised will go to the riders.

Chance still on to join runners



THERE'S still time to enter the Action Heart five-mile run.

It is the 23rd year that the event has taken place and it starts and finishes at Russell's Hall Hospital, Dudley.

Runners get under way at 9.30am on Sunday, February 24.

Entry forms can be downloaded at www.actionheartrunning.com

You can also enter online by visiting the website www.runbritain.co.uk and searching for the event.

Action Heart will be offering attractive incentives for sponsorship raised so do get busy with your sponsorship forms.

Anyone collecting £50-plus qualifies for an adidas sweatshirt while bringing in more than £100 lands a pair of adidas running shoes.

Support

Members of the public are advised that there will inevitably be some traffic hold-ups near the hospital as the runners go around the course.

Action Heart would like to say a big thank you to the local community for their continued support.

It's now week five in the training schedule and the programme is now demanding some sustained effort. However, if you have been building up gradually this will not be a problem.

If it becomes too tough, you can walk the rest of the way rather than give up.

The important thing is to finish each session so that on the race day you can go the distance and complete the five-mile course.

For those beginners who have already entered the run, we hope that you are finding the training schedule useful.

A word of warning to all you runners and joggers out there: Please do remember the importance of warming up those muscles before going out for your run, particularly on cold mornings or evenings.

Training: Week five

Monday: Rest

Tuesday: Two-mile jog

Wednesday: Three-mile run

Thursday: Rest

Friday: Three-mile jog

Saturday: Rest

Sunday: Four-mile jog/run

Saxons stick to task in gluepot conditions

Lutonians 5 Stourbridge Saxons 13
STOURBRIDGE got their National Two North campaign back on track after last week's defeat - but had to do it the hard way.

The Saxons were given a tough run by determined opponents playing on a gluepot pitch from which snow had to be cleared in advance. The hosts dominated the opening 10 minutes, forcing a rash of kickable penalties from the Saxons' defence but opting to run or kick for the corner.

The Stourbridge defence held out their drives, though, and when Lucs opted for a goalkick it was fluffed.

The Saxons then broke out of their half when Jamie Hearn countered from a kick ahead, Caolan Ryan making no mistake with his goalkick when desperate Lucs defence conceded a penalty.

He stretched the lead to six points with another for a Lucs offside before the game settled down to a stalemate on a deteriorating surface.

Breeze

After half-time Saxons made use of a strengthening breeze to pen Lucs - who changed from a hooped strip in the first half to a gold one in the second - back into their 22m area.

Ben Hughes was put clear but couldn't hold the pass and Tom Jarvis was unlucky to be adjudged to have knocked on when grounding Lucas Roy-Smith's chip.

Ejike Uzoigwe replaced James Rodley on the flank and could scarcely believe his luck when his first touch was to gather a ball that squirted out of a ruck.

With the defence mis-

Stourbridge Saxons

aligned he managed to break a tackle and crossed unchanged to score under the posts.

The Saxons continued to dominate territory and possession but were unable to breach a resolute home defence which eventually broke out.

Solid defence kept them out but with Stone Tuipolotu cooling his heels in the sin bin Lucs were finally able to force a short-range runner over the tryline with the last play of the game.

Coach Mike Umaga said: "We came here looking for a win to get our season back on track. The boys did really well to keep their focus in difficult conditions.

"They threw everything at us - as we knew they would - but we were dominant in attack and our defence held strong, we delivered what we had to and it's nice to be back on the winning trail."

He made scrum-half Roy Smith his man of the match.



Anyone volunteering to wash the kit this week?



Jamie Hearn breaks clear to set up the first try for Stourbridge



Colin Downey finds the going deep at Stafford

Going is grim for runners

MEMBERS of Stourbridge Running Club put their best foot forward in the Midlands Cross-country Championships despite grim going.

Freezing conditions, snow and mud greeted competitors at Stafford Common.

First lady home for Stourbridge was Joan Clarke, in a time of 35min 11sec.

Second was Natalie Dellar, exactly four minutes behind while Ruby Ooi was third in 56:28.

Pete Walters clocked 47:02 to be first man back for Stourbridge and their second runner home was Colin Downey, who stopped the watch at 57:31.

It's defeat without all Kings men

Solihull Blossomfield 4 Kingswinford 2

KINGSWINFORD men's hockey team were left to rue the unavailability of five first-team players. They led 2-0 on Sunday, but could not stave off defeat.

Kings started brightly with second-teamers Damon Johal, Sunny Uppal, Tarran Singh, Parj Sangha and Dulla Sandhu gelling well with their team-mates.

The visitors went two up inside 15 minutes. The first goal was a superb solo effort by Ajay Sandhu, who twisted and turned three defenders and the goalkeeper before a spectacular diving finish.

Minutes later, Kam Mann intercepted a pass to feed Cole Hickman for an easy finish. But Solihull fought back to take the win.

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SPORT

Stick to it
Saxons prevail
on a gluepot
Page 39



Pressure on
But I'm ready,
says Morris
Page 39

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Athletics club on track for cashpot

WOODEN changing rooms are to be replaced with a brick unit – including disabled facilities – after Enville Athletics Social Club was given a £50,000 Sport England grant.

The club was one of four from across the region to scoop a total of £200,000 from England's Olympic and Paralympic, London 2012 Inspire legacy programme.

The money will help to fund better pavilions, changing rooms and heating systems.

Cannock Rugby Union Football Club and Alrewas Cricket Club, near Lichfield, will also benefit from the funding.

Meanwhile, plans for a new £150,000 pavilion at a cricket club near Wolverhampton that was hit by an arson attack have moved a step closer after £50,000 funding was secured.

The grant for Springhill Cricket Club, in Lower Penn, is the first major funding it has received for its pavilion and bosses said they were delighted.

Members faced being barred from their league after the Staffordshire Club Cricket Championship raised concerns over finances and lack of facilities, as they operated from two portable steel cabins after a blaze in 2005 wrecked a shelter.

Club secretary Daniel Kinsey said: "This is the first major step towards getting the new pavilion."

"We have some fantastic plans and will make it a focal point for the community."

Pointing way for umpires

HELP is at hand for those interested in becoming cricket scorers or umpires.

Courses in both skills are being run at Stourbridge Cricket Club, organised by the North Worcestershire District Cricket Development Group.

A course for young and new umpires will be staged on Tuesday, March 12 from 7pm and costs £3.50 to include a copy of the laws of the game.

The scorers' course is on Thursday, March 28 at 7pm and will cost £1 to cover the cost of a DVD.

Both courses will be administered by the Worcestershire Cricket Umpires and Scorers Association.

To book, e-mail Grainger-Paul@hotmail.co.uk or call 07969 795429.

Rowe scents a place for Gornal in next round

GORNAL manager Ian Rowe today challenged his players to fly out of the traps in the FA Vase on Saturday after their fourth-round preparations went to the dogs.

The Peacocks squad were due at Monmore Green greyhound track in Wolverhampton this evening for a team night out as part of the build-up to the re-arranged clash with Wisbech at Garden Walk.

And Rowe hopes a night on the town can help his side sniff out a place in the last 16 on Saturday and an overnight trip to Bodmin seven days later.

Rowe, whose side were due to play

FA Vase

Alvechurch on Tuesday, said: "There will be a bit of rust in the players because we have had a few games called off."

"But hopefully we can start quickly and get ourselves a place in the next round."

"We did well in the FA Cup and we've had a good run in the Vase, so there is nothing to fear."

"We know Wisbech are one of the big hitters in their league and we are expecting a tough game, but there is no pressure on us. "We've done really well to get this far – but it would be great to keep it going."

Gornal's game against Wisbech has been postponed twice because of the recent cold snap but they are hopeful of the tie finally getting the go-ahead this week, barring heavy rain in the next 48 hours.

Meanwhile, fellow Vase fourth-rounders Walsall Wood are taking inspiration from the FA Cup giant-killings.

Wood host Hanworth Villa in the fourth round of the FA Vase on Saturday having already gone further than ever before in the competition.

They beat Wigan Robin Park 2-0 in the last round and club secretary Bill Shaw said the team will draw strength from the FA

Cup shocks provided by Luton, Oldham and Leeds. He said: "Hanworth are a level higher in the pyramid and they should be favourites, but you never know what could happen in the cup competitions – look what happened at the weekend."

"We are playing very well at the moment – for what games we've played – and we've only lost once in the league this season."

"The league is the priority, but who doesn't want to get to Wembley?"

The winners face Rochester or Runcorn Town in the fifth round next Saturday and will bank £2,000 – on top of the £4,800 they have already won.

Plenty of derbies lie ahead

WOLVES' have a full house of derby matches in the 2013 Elite League speedway fixture schedule.

In the 10-team league, sides meet four clubs home and away once. But they face the other five home and away twice – and included among that number for Farnley International Wolves are clashes with Coventry and Birmingham.

Wolves also face four matches against powerful Poole and old rivals Belle Vue and Eastbourne.

The single home and away fixtures are against Peterborough, King's Lynn, Lakeside and Swindon.

Wolves speedway
(Elite League unless stated)

MARCH
Sun 10 F Lingfern TestimonialH
Tue 26 Press and PracticeH
Fri 29 Belle VueA

APRIL
Tue 02 Belle VueH
Sat 06 EastbourneA
Mon 08 PooleA
Wed 10 PooleA
Mon 15 CoventryH
Mon 22 ReservedH
Mon 29 EastbourneH

MAY
Mon 06 King's LynnH
Fri 10 CoventryA
Mon 13 British FinalH
Mon 20 B Final (re-staging date)H
Wed 22 BirminghamA
Mon 27 BirminghamH

JUNE
Mon 03 ReservedH
Fri 07 PeterboroughA
Sat 08 EastbourneA
Mon 10 LakesideH
Wed 12 King's LynnA
Mon 17 PeterboroughH
Fri 21 LakesideA
Mon 24 EastbourneH

JULY
Mon 01 Gary Peterson MemorialH
Mon 08 PooleH
Wed 10 PooleA
Thu 11 SwindonA
Mon 15 No meeting (SWC)H
Mon 22 SwindonH
Mon 29 CoventryH

AUGUST
Mon 05 No meetingH
Mon 05 Belle VueA
Wed 07 BirminghamA
Fri 09 CoventryA
Mon 12 BirminghamH
Mon 19 No MeetingH
Mon 26 Belle VueH

SEPTEMBER
TBA Coventry (Mid Trophy)H
TBA Coventry (Mid Trophy)A

OCTOBER
Tue 15 Banks's Olympique (Ind)H
● Woffinden – Page 62

NOVEMBER
Tue 15 Banks's Olympique (Ind)H
● Woffinden – Page 62

DECEMBER
Tue 15 Banks's Olympique (Ind)H
● Woffinden – Page 62

JANUARY
Tue 15 Banks's Olympique (Ind)H
● Woffinden – Page 62

FEBRUARY
Tue 15 Banks's Olympique (Ind)H
● Woffinden – Page 62

MARCH
Tue 15 Banks's Olympique (Ind)H
● Woffinden – Page 62

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Tue 15 Banks's Olympique (Ind)H
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MAY
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JUNE
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JUNE
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AUGUST
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BENBOW HAT-TRICK BOOSTS GLASSBOYS

Stourbridge 4 Hitchin Town 1
A LUKE BENBOW hat-trick enabled Stourbridge to close the gap on second-placed Hemel Hempstead to just one point.

This Evo-Stik Southern Premier game was one of only a handful of non-league matches to be played north of Worcester on Saturday. The win rewarded the efforts of Glassboys officials, first team and youth players, staff and supporters in clearing the pitch and surrounds of snow so the game could go ahead. The clash got off to a remarkable start with two goals inside the first three minutes.

The home side won a second-minute flag-kick and Ben Billingham's mis-hit corner bobbed through to Benbow who low shot struck the inside of keeper Jonathan North's right-hand upright before rolling off the unfortunate custodian and across the line.

Stourbridge joy lasted less than a minute as Jake Woodley fed a pass inside for ace marksman John Frendo to wriggle his way past Nathan Bennett and Paul McCone before hitting a deflected low shot past home debutant Stourbridge keeper Dean Coleman.

Chested
Play continued to be frenetic. McCone's seventh-minute header from Billingham's corner drifted over the bar. Six minutes later Frendo went close for the Hertfordshire side with a deflected shot.

On 32 minutes Benbow chested the ball down and worked room for a low angled shot from the left-hand side of the box that ran wide of the bar post.

Hitchin responded four minutes later with Michael Noone spreading a pass out to Jhai Dhillon. He was half-stopped but Noone collected the ball and struck a 20-yard

shot that bounced harmlessly wide. Hitchin started the better in the second half but a moment of magic from Benbow turned the game in favour of the Glassboys on 54 minutes. He chested down a throw-in from Gavin Hurren, turned and arrowed an unstoppable volley from around 20 yards past a helpless North.

That gave Stourbridge the confidence to kick on and Benbow completed his hat-trick in the 61st minute.

A pass from Hurren was not properly cut out and ran through to McCone. He pushed the ball low across the face of the goal for Benbow to provide a sliding finish from six yards out.

He continued to torment the Hitchin defence and he almost grabbed another goal on 65 minutes with a rising shot from 20 yards that flashed wide.

Stourbridge sealed victory with 11 minutes to go when Billingham was hauled over in the box and sub Sean Geddes dispatched the penalty to make it 4-1.

This victory means Gary Hackett's men have taken 18 points from their last seven league games to strengthen their standing in the table.

Stourbridge FC

Rugby players tackle mud, mud, glorious mud



Stourbridge Saxons found the going sticky in more ways than one at Luctonians. But in difficult conditions against determined opposition, the visitors won a tight National Two North game 13-5. Here Luctonians' No. 8 Paul Hulland, in what began the match as gold kit, finds his advance halted by some resolute tackling.

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